Oxfordshire Guardian

Abingdon, Wantage and Faringdon

Thursday, December 21 - Wednesday, December 27, 2017 oxfordshireguardian.co.uk Free

Plan to protect homes against floods > p5

Wishing all our readers and advertisers a merry Christmas

We wish you a Merry Christmas

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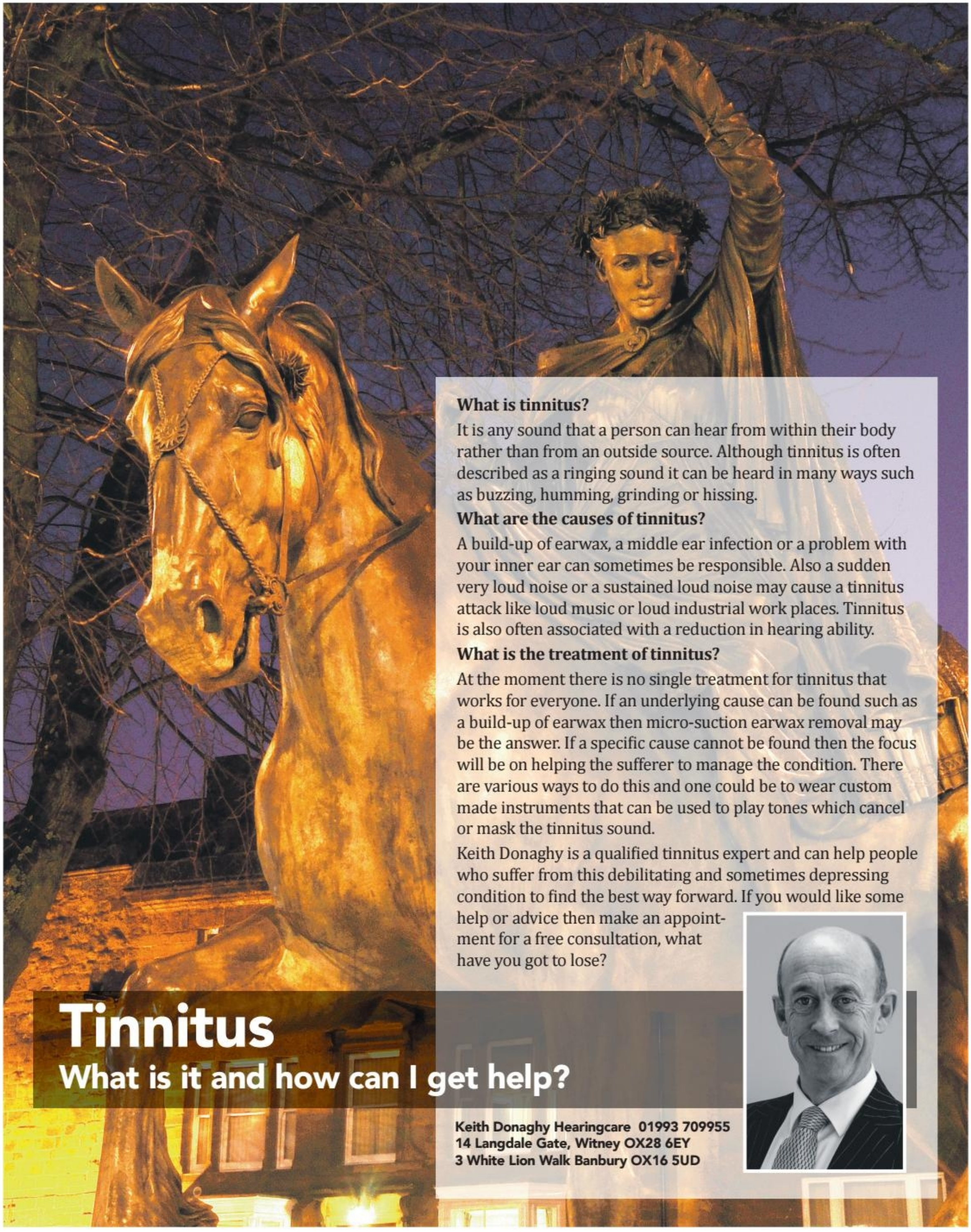

Tinnitus

What is it and how can I get help?

What is tinnitus?

It is any sound that a person can hear from within their body rather than from an outside source. Although tinnitus is often described as a ringing sound it can be heard in many ways such as buzzing, humming, grinding or hissing.

What are the causes of tinnitus?

A build-up of earwax, a middle ear infection or a problem with your inner ear can sometimes be responsible. Also a sudden very loud noise or a sustained loud noise may cause a tinnitus attack like loud music or loud industrial work places. Tinnitus is also often associated with a reduction in hearing ability.

What is the treatment of tinnitus?

At the moment there is no single treatment for tinnitus that works for everyone. If an underlying cause can be found such as a build-up of earwax then micro-suction earwax removal may be the answer. If a specific cause cannot be found then the focus will be on helping the sufferer to manage the condition. There are various ways to do this and one could be to wear custom made instruments that can be used to play tones which cancel or mask the tinnitus sound.

Keith Donaghy is a qualified tinnitus expert and can help people who suffer from this debilitating and sometimes depressing condition to find the best way forward. If you would like some help or advice then make an appointment for a free consultation, what have you got to lose?

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Its official

Hearing aids can do more than improve your hearing

Following a survey carried out in 2015 by Anovum (a market research company) on 1325 hearing impaired people (605 hearing aid wearers and 720 not wearing hearing aids). The survey reports that hearing aids not only improve capabilities of hearing well but also improved the general health of hearing aid wearers compared to hearing impaired people who do not wear a hearing aid. Hearing aid users are less likely to think they have the symptoms of dementia, feel less physically and mentally exhausted, sleep better and are less likely to suffer from depression.

The survey confirms what some Audiologists have suspected for some time, that hearing aids are not only good for correcting hearing loss but in fact contribute to better and more active lives, better quality of life, and better overall health.

For the hearing impaired workers who wear a hearing aid it is reported that their hearing aids are useful for their job and that the hearing aids also increase the chance of them getting promoted, being in the right job and getting more salary compared to those hearing impaired people who have not obtained hearing aids.

The survey also found that hearing impaired people are more likely to be teased or harassed because they don't wear a hearing aid compared to those that do.

The full report can be found at EuroTrak UK 2015 – ehima

A new hearing system is just the beginning and a hearing aid system is only as good as the audiologist prescribing and programming it.

At Keith Donaghy Hearingcare we offer the best bespoke hearing aid systems virtually unnoticeable fitting comfortably into your ear.

Keith will help you every step of the way whilst you adjust to your new hearing ability, for some this takes months for others a matter of a few weeks but Keith is always on hand to answer questions or give advice on getting the best from your system. The last thing he wants (as is often the case when insufficient aftercare is available) is for your hearing aids to end up in the back of a drawer somewhere, unused because you felt that nothing else could be done to rectify any programming or rehabilitation problems.

Keith wants to know if you have any concerns about your hearing aids, no matter how big or small, so that you and he can work together to achieve the best results.

Should I have my hearing checked?

Keith Donaghy R.H.A.D., F.S.H.A.A has the answers.

When should I have my hearing checked?

Just like eyes and teeth, it is recommended that hearing is checked once a year or certainly if someone thinks that their hearing is diminishing. All hearing tests and consultations are free at Keith Donaghy Hearingcare.

How do I detect a change in my hearing?

It is usually difficult because the deterioration is often gradual, so hearing needs to be checked regularly by a professional. Friends and relatives may tell you that you are not hearing properly or you may find that the television etc. needs to be turned up for you to hear it.

When do I need to use a hearing aid?

If you have a significant loss in your hearing then a new digital hearing aid system will bring your hearing back to as near normal as possible. There are many digital systems available on the market and generally speaking the more sophisticated the system the more expensive it is.

How much do hearing aids cost?

When investing in a hearing aid system you are not just purchasing hearing aids but also the after care package so it is important to consider what the standard of help and advice is available when you start wearing your new hearing aids. At Keith Donaghy Hearingcare prices start from £980.00 for the latest digital technology hearing aids which includes the initial hearing test, fitting and complete aftercare package. Because Keith Donaghy is local patients rarely wait more than a few days before they can see him.

How long do hearing aids last?

All hearing aids come with a 2 year manufacturers guarantee. Providing that the hearing aid system is cleaned and serviced regularly it will last for 6 to 8 years. However many people change their system after 3 to 4 years usually because they want to use the latest technology available.

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Wishing all our readers and advertisers a merry Christmas

Neighbours' advent windows help children's charity funds

By Owen Hughes

REINDEER, Oxford's dreaming spires and even a Star Wars-themed nativity scene have all appeared in the windows of a north Abingdon neighbourhood in a bid to raise funds for charity.

The 24 homes along South Avenue are revealing their individually designed advent window decorations one day at a time in the lead up to Christmas as they try to reach a £100 Just Giving target for Helen & Douglas House.

The campaign has been organised by Ann Phillips, a self-employed beautician and network marketing coach, who said: "I got the idea from my friend in Stanton Harcourt who asked me to help with her snowman for their advent window, and I thought 'why can't we do that here?'

"I knocked on the doors all down our road and got a really good response and most of them wanted to join in.

"It's a great way of bringing the community together. People are talking to each other and quite often at around 4pm people are walking up and down the road to see which house is next."

Each house at their turn to draw back the curtain will also display a board outside asking for donations to Helen & Douglas House.

The collection is in memory of Molly Beatrice Gibbard, who died in 2006 when she was just 10 months old after being born with heart and lung disease.

Molly's father, Steve Gibbard, said: "It's nice that people want to keep fundraising for Molly and when it's other people doing it, not even family but neighbours and friends, it's just really special. We would have been lost without Helen & Douglas House and they still support us now."

Mr Gibbard fundraises for the charity every year and estimates he has so far raised around £45,000.

He added that he and his two sons, aged six and nine, have "walked up and down the road and had a look around at all the windows, but I do like the Star Wars one, that's probably my favourite".

South Avenue residents will raise a glass of mulled wine and enjoy a mince pie together on the 24th when all of the seasonal window designs will be on display.

Ann hopes to repeat the campaign again next year with more houses taking part.

Donations can be made at www.justgiving.com/southavenuechristmaswindows.

All white on the night in teachers' panto

AN Abingdon school put on a pantomime to remember in front of a packed audience of students and parents.

Teachers and staff at Fitzharrys Secondary School donned their silliest frocks and wigs for their twist on a classic Christmas panto performing Snow White and the Seven Vertically Challenged People.

Headteacher Jonathan Dennett, who played Dopey, said: "The audience were great, joining in from the very start, cheering and booing – in the right places – all the way through."

■ Turn to page 12 to see another way in which Fitzharrys embraced the festive season.

The Oxfordshire Guardian has more printed copies than any other newspaper in the county

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Read this paper online at
www.oxfordshireguardian.co.uk

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Printed by Iliffe Print - 'PrintWeek Newspaper Printer of the Year 2016'

Winter driving reminder after spate of crashes

By George Welch

THE county's fire service has stressed the importance of driving carefully in wintery conditions after an increase in the number of crashes.

Drivers were urged by Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service at the start of the month to take extra care on the roads.

However, since Wednesday last week, multiple casualties were lucky to escape serious injury, according to the fire service, following four serious crashes on the county's roads.

An elderly man suffered minor injuries and a woman was cut free from her car after a two-vehicle crash in East Hendred near the new housing development and the junction of White Road on Wednesday last week.

Fire crews freed the woman by removing the driver's side and roof of the car.

The cars collided shortly after 5.30pm on the A417.

This was before a busy Friday for the emergency services on a day in which a car ploughed into a lorry on the A40, a vehicle flipped on the M40 and another two-vehicle crash, this time near Shellingford.

Perhaps the luckiest escape was when a driver and passenger escaped the mangled wreckage of their car after smashing into a parked lorry on the A40 near Oxford.

Firefighters said the people involved were 'fortunate' not to sustain serious injuries following the crash, which happened shortly before 11.30am.

Incident commander, crew manager Mike Milling added: "This could well have been a life-threatening and life-changing road traffic incident."

A driver managed to escape the wreckage of their car without the aid of the emergency services at a similar time after driving it off the M40 and flipping onto its roof.

Thames Valley Police are still investigating the cause of the crash, which happened at 11.30am on Friday.

At about 6pm that evening a seriously injured woman was rescued from her car after colliding with another vehicle on the B4508 near Shellingford.

Fire crews used hydraulic rescue equipment to remove the roof and doors of the car to enable the casualty to be rescued.

Watch manager Jon Walker added: "Please pay attention when you are out and about on the road this festive season, do not use anything that will cause a distraction and drive to the road and weather conditions."

For winter driving tips, visit 365alive.co.uk/cms/

Two vehicle crash in East Hendred

Woman rescued from her car in Shellingford

The driver and passenger escaped this mangled wreckage on the A40

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Primary schools climb up tables

TEACHERS, pupils and parents in Oxfordshire are celebrating after the county surged up the national primary school league tables.

Across the county, 61 per cent of pupils achieved the government's benchmark standard, up nine per cent from 2016.

Tables published by the Department for Education last week show the percentage of Year 6 pupils who met the expected standard in reading, writing and maths in the 2016/17 academic year.

The Ridgeway C of E Primary School in Childrey led the way with 100 per cent of its pupils meeting the expected standard.

A handful of schools recorded an impressive 90+ per cent, including Kingham (97 per cent), Goring CE (92), Shiplake CE (92), Bletchingdon CE (90) and Longfields in Bicester (90).

But results varied widely – Long Wittenham CE recorded 13 per cent while Stephen Freeman Community in Didcot and Orchard Meadow, Oxford, saw 14 per cent.

Oxfordshire recorded 61 per cent of pupils meeting the expected standard.

This is a significant improvement on last year, the first year of major changes to assessments, when the county had a record of 52 per cent.

Nationally the number of 11-year-olds meeting the standard rose from 53 per cent.

Pupils are deemed to have met the expected standard if they achieve a scaled score of 100 or more in their reading and maths tests, and their teacher assesses them as "working at the expected standard" or better in writing.

A total of 202 out of 232, or 87 per cent of Oxfordshire state and special schools, for which data is available, achieved 100+ for both their reading and maths.

In another boost for the education authority, nine per cent of pupils are 'achieving at a higher standard', also in line with the national average.

However, data for Oxfordshire shows that the county's primary schools are below average for writing and maths.

School standards minister Nick Gibb said the results showed "pupils are now leaving primary school better prepared for the rigours of secondary school and for future success in their education".

Bus driver admits hitting a pedestrian

A WALLINGFORD bus driver has admitted dangerous driving after his double-decker mounted the curb and smashed into a pedestrian in Reading.

Cheikh Daouda Senghor, 40, from St Johns Road in Wallingford, appeared at Reading Magistrates' Court on Thursday last week.

He told the court he put his foot on the accelerator instead of the brake before knocking down Simon Smith in Gun Street.

CCTV footage from the incident on June 24 went viral after it appeared to show Mr Smith immediately walking into a nearby bar after the number 17 bus ploughed into his back.

My Smith escaped the ordeal with minor injuries but the court was told that he is still off work nearly six months on.

The court heard a number of passengers who were interviewed after the crash had claimed that Senghor was driving too fast.

Alexander Dos Santos, defending, said his client "sends his apologies to the victim".

District Judge Davinder Lacchar decided the incident was too serious to be dealt with at magistrates' court and referred Senghor to be sentenced at Reading Crown Court at a later date.

Taking learning to new heights

By Eva Astreinidou

IT has been a 'momentous' time for a school that opened its much-anticipated £6million science facility at a new campus.

A new state-of-the-art building at King Alfred's Academy in Wantage was opened by the area's MP and scientists last week.

The two-storey facility replaces two 1960's buildings and includes a suite of high-spec laboratories, classrooms and study areas for students from Years 9 to Sixth Form, following the Academy's decision to move to two sites in January 2018.

Headteacher Jo Halliday said: "The move has taken many years and months of planning. It is almost impossible to believe that we are about to arrive at our destination: a two-site school, a wonderful new campus and enhanced facilities across both sites that can only take teaching and learning at King Alfred's to new heights."

Ms Halliday, a scientist herself, who is leaving her post at Easter, added: "I can move on with confidence knowing that what was once an ambitious dream is now a wonderful reality."

One of the new labs will now house a Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM), donated by JEOL, a supplier of complex scientific instruments.

Ed Vaizey MP with Simon Spiers, chief executive of Vale Academy Trust and right, guests at the opening

To buy such a complex scientific instrument costs upwards of £75,000, but a parent and graduate of the Academy decided to donate it to be used by students at the school.

Chris Spencer, who is principal technical support engineer for JEOL, arranged for the machine to be delivered to his garage in Wantage last year, where he spent a lot of his free time getting it to a state where it can be used easily in school.

Neil McFeely, head of physics, said: "I know of only a few schools that are lucky enough to have [this kind of microscope] on site – this will be of massive benefit in our science teaching across the curriculum and open up a whole new microscopic world to our students."

The opening ceremony was performed by Wantage MP Ed Vaizey and Christopher Duff, of the National Space Academy and STFC Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, who, like Mr Spencer, is another former King Alfred's pupil.

More than 100 guests attended the opening, including a number of representatives from science and technology organisations, including Culham Science Centre and Williams F1.

Power station working to keep you switched on over Christmas

IT'S business as usual for Didcot B Power Station staff who will work 24 hours a day over Christmas to keep the ovens fired-up across nearly two million homes.

The team at Didcot will continue to work around the clock to keep up with the increased demand for energy ensuring nobody ends up with cold turkey and raw sprouts on their plate.

RWE operates power plants across the country and combined generates enough energy to cook nearly 4.4 million turkeys, 15 million portions of potatoes and 160 million Christmas puddings.

Neil Scott, Didcot B Power Station manager, said: "Once again our teams will be working over the festive season.

"For them Christmas is business as usual.

"Electricity needs to be produced as it's required, 365 days a year."

He added that it was thanks to the "dedication and hard work of our staff" that the station can operate.

Didcot has contingency plans to cover all eventualities to make sure homes stay fully powered at Christmas, including 4x4's, emergency rations and sleeping equipment in case the shift team are snowed in.

InBrief

Banned from towns

A 29-year old man has been banned from entering Wantage, Grove and Ardington until December 2022.

Thomas Skelton, of no fixed abode, appeared at Oxford Magistrates' Court on Wednesday December 6 where he was issued with a Criminal Behaviour Order.

Sergeant Lewis Boyce, of Thames Valley Police, said: "We hope it serves as a reminder that if people decide to embark on causing anti-social behaviour to a community, the police will utilise the relevant legislation available to stop such behaviour."

New councils boss

SOUTH Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have appointed Mark Stone as their permanent chief executive.

Mr Stone, who has spent the last six months as acting chief executive, was appointed following the councils' respective full council meetings last week.

He was hired following what the councils described as a "rigorous interview process".

Mr Stone replaces David Hill, who left his post in June less than a year into the role.

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State-of-the-art toilets to open at Orchard Centre

DIDCOT'S £50million Orchard Centre expansion will include a state-of-the art toilet facility for disabled shoppers.

South Oxfordshire District Council is funding the new changing places toilet, which has been designed specifically for people with multiple learning or physical disabilities.

It will make Didcot the only town in Oxfordshire to have two 'changing places' toilets for shoppers with disabilities, according to the council.

The other is inside the Cornerstone arts centre.

Changing Places is a higher standard of toilet facility aimed to meet the needs of people with profound and multiple learning difficulties.

The new Orchard Centre toilet will include a height adjustable changing bench, a hoist and enough space for up to two carers to provide any support.

Mum-of-three Karen England who is a full-time carer for her 14-year-old daughter, welcomed the move.

She said: "Thousands of disabled people rely on these facilities every day. It will be so much more enjoyable for our family and so many others knowing we do not have to find a suitable toilet - or worse, go home because there isn't one!"

SODC leader Cllr John Cotton added: "Didcot will easily be our largest town and it is vital we have the facilities in place to support new and existing residents."

Young performers rain in West End

The Stagecoach youngsters on stage at the Shaftesbury Theatre as they performed to family and friends

ASPIRING Faringdon-based performing arts students got a taste of stardom when they entertained friends and family on stage in London's legendary West End as part of a nationwide initiative.

The Shaftesbury Theatre welcomed students from 16 Stagecoach Performing Arts schools across the country who performed a piece from the classic musical Singin' in the Rain.

James Barker, Stagecoach Performing Arts Faringdon principal, said: "For the children to be able to perform at the Shaftesbury Theatre is a dream come true, whether they dream of being West End stars or dance, sing and act for fun.

"It was a magical day for all concerned, with the students gaining the wonderful experience of performing in the West End.

The pupils put all their efforts into an astounding performance, which had everyone on their feet, cheering."

Notable alumni of Stagecoach Performing Arts include Emma Watson, Jamie Bell and Tuppence Middleton.

Tap the app for bin collections and waste tips

WASTE collection information is now just a screen tap away in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse.

The two district councils have launched a new smartphone app, which is available free of charge for iPhone and Android phones.

By tapping their postcode in and selecting their address, residents can use the Binzone app to find out which bin is being emptied this week and what day it's being emptied.

The app will also send users a notification if their waste collection day changes due to a bank holiday.

It will let residents know if collections are disrupted by snow or icy conditions.

Binzone can also be used to look up what bin particular types of rubbish goes in.

Councillor Tony Harbour, cabinet member for waste at SODC, said: "If the weather worsens again this winter I think the Binzone app will come into its own by keeping our residents informed on what is happening to their collections.

"It is very handy to have the information in one place."

Visit tinyurl.com/zbbn752 (SODC) or tinyurl.com/hvy5xj4 (Vale) for your Christmas and New Year bin collections.

Plan to protect homes against future floods

By Eva Astreinidou

PLANS addressing concerns over flooding risk in the Vale and South Oxfordshire have been signed off, a decade on from major flooding that devastated some of the area.

The Environment Agency confirmed earlier this month it is working on a planning application to bring a £120million flood alleviation scheme to life in Oxford.

This comes as an independent review commissioned by Vale of White Horse District Council determined that the scheme would not have an impact on communities downstream, following concerns it would increase the risk of flooding.

Vale leader Councillor Matthew Barber said: "This is very positive news.

"We know communities by the River Thames will always have concerns over flooding and we will continue to work with them and the Environment Agency on feasible and appropriate flood prevention projects, such as the St Helen's Mill scheme in Abingdon."

In July 2007, around 660 homes in Abingdon were affected by flooding.

In the decade since, the Environment Agency has put forward plans across Oxfordshire to alleviate the flooding hotspots.

Now, the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme will see a three-mile long development which is expected to run from the north of Botley Road to re-join the River Thames near Kennington.

The scheme aims to prevent a repeat of "disruption and damage" caused by flooding in 2007, 2012 and 2013/14.

Layla Moran, Lib Dem MP for Oxford West and Abingdon, welcomed the report but added that she would continue to lobby the government to invest in flood protection even further.

She said: "I will be vigilant to ensure all possible protections are in place.

"I continue to make the case for more investment in flood protection in Parliament, pressure key actors like the councils and insurers to put people, not profit, first and champion awareness of the role climate change plays in increasing the frequency and severity of the worst events."

As well as protecting homes and businesses, the scheme would stop flooding in Botley and Abingdon roads, which are major transport routes into Oxford.

Most of the money is in place, but a further £4m is needed to complete the scheme.

The Oxford scheme is being funded by the government, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, Oxford City Council and Thames Water.

If the plans are approved work is due to start next year and construction is expected to take three years.

Chance for kids to have a blow out with inflatable fun

CHILDREN can burn off some energy at an inflatable Christmas wonderland.

Didcot Leisure Centre will feature inflatables and equipment for children aged 18 months to 12 years over three days this festive season at an event, running this Friday and Saturday and next Saturday. It will also feature music, fancy dress and more.

Tickets are £7.50 per child for one a half hours – adults go free.

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News

Driver's lucky escape after rail bridge crash

A DRIVER had a lucky escape after his car crashed onto railway tracks and landed upside down.

It is believed the car "careered off the road" and down an embankment in Hill Road ending up on its roof on the tracks at Chinnor Railway Station on Thursday last week.

The driver was not badly injured and luckily no train was due.

No passenger trains were running last Friday at the heritage railway, but works-trains were operating on the line in connection with the Princes Risborough extension.

Danny Woodward, chairman of the line, said: "Our Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway Incident Team arrived on site very quickly – the guys are all either existing or retired senior railway managers – and they immediately set in motion what needed to happen.

"The Office of Rail & Road were informed and we have had the excellent cooperation of the emergency services and Oxfordshire County Council highways department."

A crane lifted the vehicle debris out of the way and repairs were made to the track and signalling equipment.

Increase in number of sexual abuse calls

By Eva Astreinidou

A CHILDREN'S charity has revealed there has been an increase in the amount of people getting in touch over concerns a child is being sexually abused.

NSPCC announced that over the last two years its helpline referred 83 calls and emails to local agencies in Oxfordshire.

There were also a further 70 contacts where helpline staff gave advice about sexual abuse against young people.

Nationally, the charity says it has seen an increase of 31 per cent in referrals over the last year, estimating that one in 20 children have experienced sexual abuse.

One caller who phoned the NSPCC helpline said: "I am concerned that a young girl in the neighbourhood might be at risk of sexual abuse by men who visit the house on weekends. There is lots of drinking that goes on and mum doesn't seem to be too concerned about leaving her alone with them. Mum can be often heard shouting and swearing at the girl and I don't think she is fit to care for her."

A charity spokesperson said a child is sexually abused when they are forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities, which doesn't have to be physical contact and can happen online.

Now, the charity is calling for a UK government-commissioned, nationwide study on child abuse and neglect so they can understand the true scale of this problem.

John Cameron, head of helplines at the NSPCC, said: "It is deeply worrying that so many children are potentially being exposed to such a devastating experience, but at the same time it also suggests that as a society we are much more alert to the risks and much more willing to come forward and share our concerns."

Off-duty PC due in court after assault on woman

A POLICE officer is due in court next month charged with causing grievous bodily harm with intent after an incident in the summer.

Rebecca Barnett, 33, of Wood End, Banbury, was given a postal requisition to appear at Banbury Magistrates' Court on January 15.

The charge is in connection with an assault on a 29-year-old woman in Addison Road, Banbury, on the evening of June 10.

PC Barnett, who was off duty at the time of the incident, is stationed in Banbury, but is currently suspended from duties while criminal proceedings are ongoing.

Fake cigarettes on sale in pubs

PUB-GOERS and clubbers should be on the look-out for criminals selling smuggled and fake cigarettes and tobacco.

Recent research in Banbury and Cowley revealed nearly half of illegal tobacco consumers target pubs and clubs as their main source of supply.

Oxfordshire County Council's trading standards team warn that cheap illegal tobacco can be attractive but its availability helps children to start smoking, brings communities into contact with organised criminals and undermines legitimate businesses.

Cllr Judith Heathcoat, cabinet member for trading standards, said: "Anyone involved in the sale of illegal tobacco commits a criminal offence which could result in a hefty fine and lengthy prison sentence."

Breeders warning

PEOPLE planning to add a cute puppy to the family should be aware of dishonest pet breeders and smugglers.

Oxfordshire County Council's trading standards team is asking residents to 'do their homework' and check for false or forged documents that can lead buyers to believe the puppies have been imported legally, bred in the UK or are vaccinated.

For more information, visit https://tinyurl.com/y9q6bmzb.

Incinerator burns its one millionth tonne

By Samantha McGregor

A CONTROVERSIAL £200million incinerator has reached a milestone – it has burned one million tonnes of rubbish.

The waste plant, at Ardley, near Bicester, opened in 2014, and since then the equivalent of 450 Olympic swimming pools worth of waste has been burned there.

Viridor, which operates the site, says the waste has been converted into enough energy to power 38,000 homes.

But the project did not have an easy run. There was fierce local opposition and the matter ended up at a public inquiry and in the High Court.

Concerns were raised at the time about increases in traffic, particularly more lorries, as waste is brought to the site from across Oxfordshire.

Now three years on the incinerator deals with 95 per cent of Oxfordshire's waste.

Oxfordshire County Council cabinet member for environment, Yvonnne Constance, said: "I am delighted to see the Ardley Energy Recovery Facility reach this milestone.

"The service this facility provides in converting waste produced by the residents of Oxfordshire into valuable electricity is excellent.

From left, Ardley ERF operations manager Jim Thompson, Viridor regional contracts manager Paul Rowland, Viridor's managing director of major contracts Chris Jonas, Oxfordshire County Council cabinet member for environment Yvonne Constance and Oxfordshire County Council strategic manager (waste and transport) Andrew Pau

"I look forward to continuing to work with Viridor to maximise even further the environmental benefits the ERF brings, particularly energy generation."

Viridor's managing director of major contracts Chris Jonas said: "Viridor and Oxfordshire County Council share a goal of recycling first and taking the residual waste – that which cannot be recycled – and giving it a new purpose.

"In this case this was achieved by transforming the non-recyclable waste into renewable energy and diverting more than 95 per cent from landfill."

Viridor has a 30-year contract to run the facility on behalf of the county council.

The council said the burner had to be built because the cost of landfill tax rose dramatically.

The firm has built an education centre at the site and people can book visits to see the incinerator behind the scenes.

InBrief

Youthquake top word

OXFORD Dictionaries has named 'youthquake' as word of the year after a five-fold increase in usage over the past 12 months.

The noun first emerged in 1965 and means 'a significant cultural, political, or social change arising from the actions or influence of young people'.

Casper Grathwohl, president of Oxford Dictionaries, said: "At a time when our language is reflecting a deepening unrest and exhausted nerves, it is a rare political word that sounds a hopeful note.

"As the annus horribilis of 2017 draws to a close, a year which many of us feel we've barely survived, I think it's time for a word we can all rally behind."

Prime Minister Theresa May's snap election has been credited as having an impact on the word's usage spiking in June with a swing towards Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party from the youth vote.

Drink drive warning

OXFORDSHIRE'S fire service and Thames Valley Police have teamed up to launch a campaign urging road users not to drink and drive.

The authorities warned a single drink could put motorists over the limit and even small amounts of alcohol (or drugs) can affect vision, co-ordination and decision making skills.

Alcohol played a part in almost one in five deaths on county roads in 2016.

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Victoria Prentis and Layla Moran were among the choir of MPs who sang in Westminster Abbey to highlight the plight of those in Syria

MPs sing for Syrian victims

TWO Oxfordshire MPs have been singing their support for a charity that helps victims of the Syrian conflict.

On Tuesday last week Oxford West & Abingdon MP Layla Moran joined forces with north Oxfordshire MP Victoria Prentis for the 2017 Singing for Syrians concert and helped raise £32,000.

More than 600 people attended the event at St Margaret's Church, Westminster Abbey organised by Mrs Prentis to raise money for the Hands Up Foundation which supports vulnerable people in Syria.

For the first time Ms Moran joined the choir of 14 MPs for the event at which there were readings from actors including Samuel West, Julie Christie and Martin Jarvis as well as a performance of Winter Wonderland by Alexander Armstrong.

Mrs Prentis said: "Singing together is a simple yet effective way to raise money for those most in need in Syria.

"It is really important to me that the choir is cross-party – it shows that we can all work together to help some of the world's most vulnerable people.

"They all sang beautifully and showed that the plight of the Syrian people has not been forgotten."

Ms Moran added: "It was a privilege to sing in the choir at such a magical event.

"In my youth I went to Damascus when my family lived in Jordan.

"My heart breaks for the people whose lives have been affected by the conflict and so when Victoria told me about this event I jumped at the chance to do my little bit."

Sacks of love as presents given to sick children

Sleigh2Give delivers to hospital

By George Welch

JOY was spread across the faces of dozens of sick children as generous donors gave more gifts than ever as part of a Christmas present appeal.

Ill youngsters at Oxford's Children's Hospital had their stay brightened by Didcot fundraising group Play2Give's Sleigh2Give festive campaign.

Donations, ranging from toys and baby items to arts and crafts, DVDs, books and board games, were handed out by Santa and his helping elves at the specialist hospital at the John Radcliffe in Headington.

The founder of our charity of the year, 29-year-old Andy Baker, who became his elf self for the event, reckons this year's drive topped last year's total of 3,000 gifts.

Andy, a former patient at the hospital, said: "Sleigh2Give 2017 has been our most successful and biggest yet – which is absolutely incredible.

"Last year's appeal was phenomenal with 3,000 gifts totalling around £12,000.

"But this year we have seen more supporters come on board and more sacks and boxes were delivered, via a convoy of five vehicles full to the brim to the children's hospital.

"I think it certainly tops last year – I am over the moon.

"At home in the final few days we could hardly move in the hall or the lounge – it was like Elf Baker's grotto!" he added.

The group visited three of six wards, including the cancer (Kamran's) ward, the general (Bellhouse-Drayson) ward and the teenage (Melanie's) Ward.

P2G is particularly associated with the latter, having raised £40,000 to name and fund the patient room.

Andy said: "Sleigh2Give, like Play2Give, just keeps growing year on year – and this particular campaign at this time of year just melts people's hearts even more to dig so deep and donate so generously.

"Again it was an inspiring, uplifting and heart-warming visit."

Andy added his thanks to all supporters, including appeal sponsors Go Green Taxis which also offered transportation to the hospital

Picture: Phil Goodall

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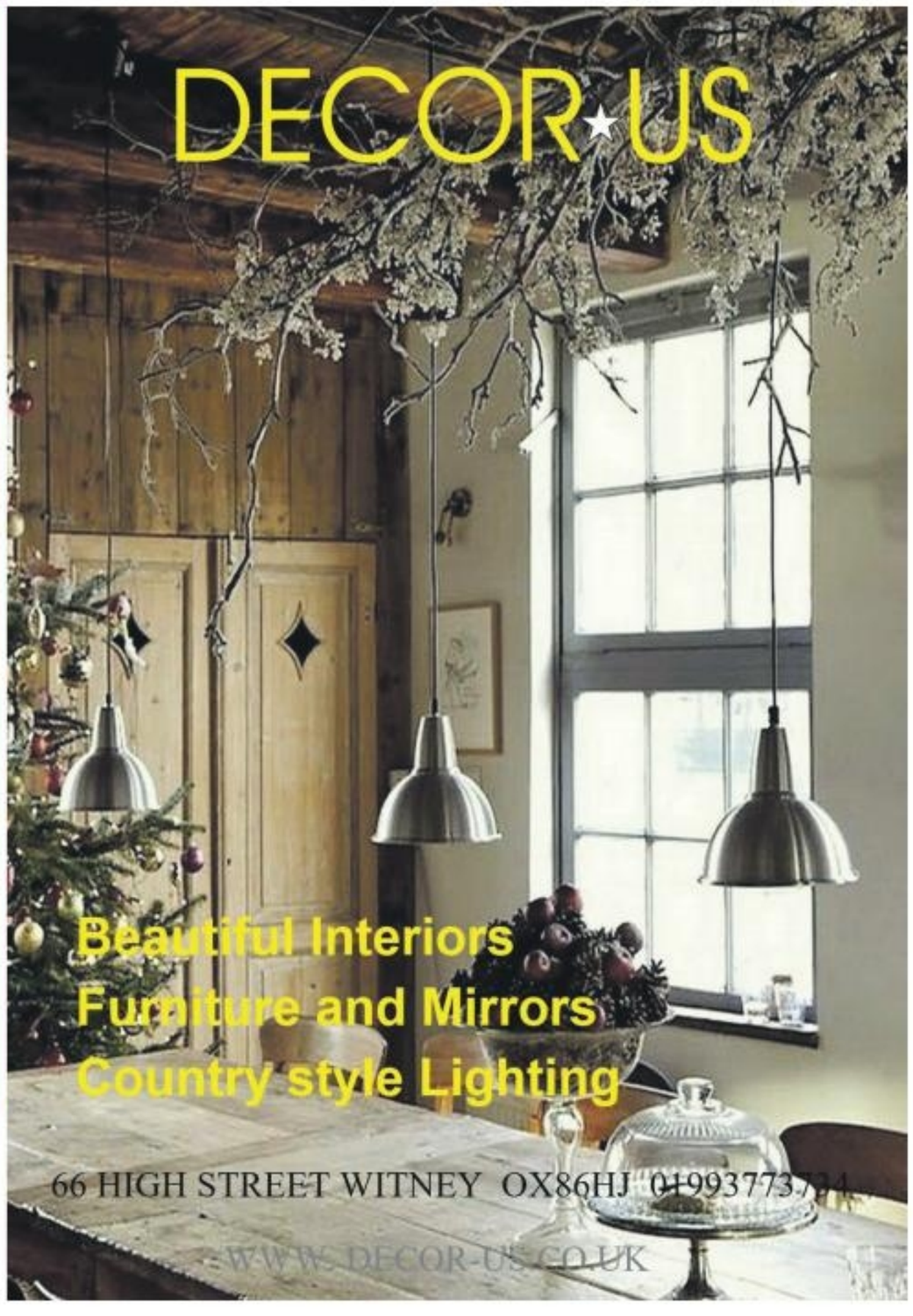

Some of the gifts before being delivered to the wards
Pictures: *Bradlee Moore*

and back and Didcot's Changing Lives which helps those in need which contributed £2,700 worth of presents.

P2G has raised more than £53,000 in 10 years for the children's hospital.

For more information and to donate to P2G visit tinyurl.com/zksd8xx

£100m pound deal for retail centre approved

COUNCILLORS have backed proposals to buy Banbury's Castle Quay shopping centre in a deal totalling more than £100million.

The move comes after the current owner pulled out of a major regeneration of the shopping centre.

Aberdeen Standard Investments currently owns 85 per cent of the site, and Cherwell District Council owns 15 per cent.

Last year the investment firm was given planning permission to build a multi-screen cinema, supermarket, hotel and restaurants along the canalside and former Spiceball Leisure Centre land.

Now the council has stepped in to rescue the project and says it will cost "in the region" of £60m to build the extension, while the "final bill will be over £100m".

Cherwell said it will fund the project through loans which will be repaid from rental income from the centre.

Contracts are due to be exchanged this week, but the council said the cost of buying the shopping centre would remain "confidential at this stage".

Cllr Tony Ilott, Cherwell's lead member for financial management, said: "This is an historic day for Cherwell as it signifies the moment we seal our commitment to regenerating the centre of Banbury, starting with the precinct and CQ2.

"Banbury has been without a town centre supermarket for 10 years and has been in desperate need of a multi-screen cinema long before that.

"With our intervention, we can guarantee that these plans come to fruition and use them to support our wider regeneration plans that will create a thriving town centre the people of Banbury deserve and can be proud of."

Cherwell said it would review the size of the planned and current units and was working with retail experts to revamp the shopping centre.

It is hoped work can start next summer with completion due in 2020.

To date, The Light cinema, Lidl, Gourmet Burger Kitchen, Nandos, Zizzis and Chiquitos have all reaffirmed their commitment to the scheme.

Sean Woodcock, Labour group leader, said: "Borrowing to invest in growth makes good economic sense.

"That is what we see in the council's purchase of Castle Quay and development of Castle Quay Two.

"But we made it plain; this is not a blank cheque. If the project fails to deliver the revenue as promised, if shops remain empty and the town fails to regenerate; we will ask questions and be prepared to criticise."

Cherwell is also planning to regenerate Bolton Road, Tramway and canal side to increase the housing, retail and hospitality on offer.

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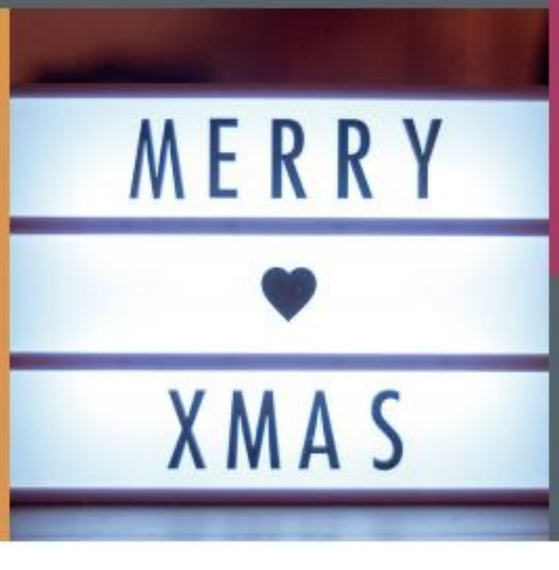

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News

Joiners craft woodwork award

A FAMILY-RUN firm has won a prestigious industry award for its two-year long wood work restoration of an Edwardian house.

The 10 employees of Gelder Joinery, Headington, won Woodworking Project of the Year at the British Woodworking Federation Awards last month for the restoration of the Oxfordshire home.

Gelder Joinery began work on the project in November 2015 and supplied the property with 32 windows, 12 doors, three large garage door sets, a summer house and a stable block.

The restoration required was the largest conservation project the company had worked on and had to put up marquees and other temporary structures in order to make their workspace large enough to complete the work.

Bryan Gelder, managing director at Gelder Joinery, said: "We worked with four timber merchants who in turn sourced much of the material from France. We're honoured to have won this award. All the team have played a part in this wonderful project and we are thrilled with the outcome so far."

Gelder Joinery will return to the project to complete two loggias, two pergolas and a tennis pavilion with a decorative internally exposed roof.

The team from Gelder Joinery who picked up the award for woodworking project of the year for their restoration work

No let up in battles over Brexit

By Eva Astreinidou

OPINION was split as Oxfordshire's politicians reacted to an eventful week in the House of Commons in which the Prime Minister was defeated over Brexit.

In a vote last week, 11 Tory rebels backed giving Parliament a much greater say in leaving the EU.

Put forward by the former attorney general Dominic Grieve, the amendment requires any Brexit deal to be approved by a separate Act of Parliament before it can be implemented.

Oxford West and Abingdon MP Layla Moran said: "This humiliating government defeat is a wake-up call for this Conservative-DUP government. Hundreds of local residents emailed me asking me to support this amendment to ensure MPs can have a say over a Brexit deal that will affect people's lives, jobs, the economy and public services like our NHS for generations to come."

But aside from the 'wake-up' call to the Tory party, the result has also revealed a tense relationship between Labour and the Lib Dems over an amendment on the single market.

A motion put forward by the Lib Dems, which would have prevented ministers from using regulation powers in the Withdrawal Bill to 'create barriers' to the UK's continued membership of the single market, was voted down.

Oxford East and Labour MP Anneliese Dodds, who did not support the motion, said: "Above all, we have stressed that the government was wrong to rule out membership of the single market and that it should have kept all options open. Unfortunately the Lib Dem amendment mentioned would not have done this and that is why we did not support it."

But the Lib Dems criticised Ms Dodds for refusing to back a crucial amendment.

Oxford East Lib Dem spokesperson Conor McKenzie said: "Anneliese Dodds has shamefully failed to stand up for the jobs in Oxford East that depend on our trade with Europe.

"This is a betrayal of all the people in Oxford East who voted for her hoping they'd limit the damage caused by Brexit."

Ms Dodds said the Lib Dems' amendment would not have kept the UK in the single market as it did not "address any of the many serious flaws in the government's Withdrawal Bill".

Tributes paid to college student

RUSKIN College has paid tribute to Nuno Cardoso, who died after suffering a cardiac arrest while in the back of a police van last month.

The inquest of the 25-year-old law student, who died on November 24, was opened last week.

Mr Cardoso's college, Ruskin College in Headington, honoured the Oxford University student last week.

Principal Paul Di Felice told this newspaper: "Nuno was a valued student of the College and was highly regarded by his fellow law students, law tutor and our college community.

"He is missed by all who knew him."

Officers arrested Mr Cardoso, of Ruskin Hall, Dunstan Road, Oxford, following an alleged assault.

Mr Cardoso was being transported to Abingdon police station when he fell ill. Officers pulled over at Redbridge Park & Ride in a bid to help the arrested man.

He was taken to the John Radcliffe Hospital where he died later that day.

Results of a post-mortem examination are yet to be established and more tests, including toxicology, are to be carried out.

The incident is under investigation by the Independent Police Complaints Commission.

The full inquest has been scheduled for September 5 next year.

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News

Warning after cigarette fire

PEOPLE are reminded to properly dispose of their cigarettes after a carelessly discarded one caused a house fire in Oxford.

Black smoke bellowed from the front door and flames raged from a first floor window of the Fernhill Road home last week.

The fire broke out at around 5.30pm on Tuesday last week and the residents swiftly evacuated the burning building after hearing the fire alarm.

Fire crews from Slade and Rewley Road fire stations extinguished the inferno and a large fan cleared the remaining smoke.

Incident commander, crew manager Jason Clifford urged the public to safely discard their cigarettes using a suitable container and make sure they are fully extinguished.

He added that smoke alarms had helped alert people to the fire in time for an emergency evacution.

Hotel plan for new tech park

A 101-bed Premier Inn hotel and Beefeater is planned near Oxford.

The hotel and restaurant could be built as part of £90million plans for an Oxford technology park opposite Oxford Airport in Kidlington.

The Premier Inn and 150-cover Beefeater restaurant could create 50 jobs if approved by the council in the new year.

The hotel and restaurant complex would be ready in early 2019 to accompany the new business hub.

David Williams, a partner at one of the site's marketing agents Bidwells, said: "It is important for a technology park to have a campus-style environment.

"A large proportion of the businesses coming to the park will need to accommodate colleagues and customers from overseas, making the hotel a convenient and valuable asset."

The proposals for the hotel have been lodged with Cherwell District Council as a separate application to the development of the park itself.

The technology park is expected to create 4,000 jobs in the 440,000 sq ft development of hi-tech lab and office space.

Work on the development began in the summer and the first business units could be completed next year.

Cherwell District Council's planning committee approved the plans for the park in December 2015.

Fair way to raise funds for camp

FITZHARRY'S School in Abingdon truly embraced the festive season with four days of back-to-back Christmas fairs.

Year 7 pupils, who were off last Monday because of the snow, got right back into the swing of things by crafting a variety of Christmas goodies and gifts.

The youngsters took on the role of Santa's little helpers as part of the school's LEARN programme, which encourages leadership, excellence, ambition, respect and no limits.

Headteacher Jonathan Dennett said: "Every Christmas the Year 7s plan and organise a Christmas fair, with parents and the rest of the school coming along to help raise money for a three-day camp at Youlbury in the summer.

"They make up their own stalls and always rise to the challenge."

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Concern healthcare can't meet development levels

By Samantha McGregor

A NEW report has highlighted concerns that health and care services are not keeping pace with development in Bicester.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire, the county's independent health and social care watchdog, says the biggest concern among residents is for long waiting times for appointments at GP surgeries and lack of NHS dentists.

It comes after researchers from Healthwatch spoke to around 450 people during a two-week period in the autumn, at markets, voluntary groups and other events.

Residents said they were concerned about the "availability of adequate health and social services and their ability to access them".

The report also said there is a "strong perception" among residents that health and care services available do not meet the needs of the growing population.

The watchdog has sent a letter to NHS England about the shortage of dentists and has lobbied Oxfordshire County Council's head of adult social care raising concerns about changes to adult day care services.

Healthwatch's executive director Rosalind Pearce said: "We now urge service commissioners and providers to use this report as a starting point to produce a detailed plan for future health and social care provision for Bicester.

"Any plan needs to take fully into account the most up-to-date estimates of the likely extent, nature and timing of the projected population growth in the area."

A spokesperson for Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group said: "The priority for Oxfordshire CCG is to ensure there are effective GP and primary services across the whole county in the face of increasing demand and limited resources.

"We are currently engaging with all our communities on the future of these services, based on the particular needs of the local population."

The spokesperson added that residents had raised these concerns at local workshops held as part of the review and had called for more services at Bicester Community Hospital.

Stolen council car smashes into Aldi in robbery bid

A COUNCIL-OWNED car smashed into an Aldi in Chipping Norton.

Police are appealing for witnesses following the incident on Tuesday last week in which a vehicle was driven into the store in an attempt to steal an ATM.

Officers received a report of the attempted theft at the supermarket in Banbury Road at around 12.40am.

Police attended the scene and saw that a vehicle had been driven into the store, causing damage.

The offenders had left the scene. No one was injured during the incident and nothing was stolen.

The vehicle involved was a West Oxfordshire District Council-marked Land Rover, which was reported stolen from Witney overnight.

Detective Constable Grahame Lea said: "We are working to identify and locate the offenders. I would also like to speak to anyone who saw the distinctive vehicle being driven in the area at around the time."

If you can help, call 101.

InBrief

Need office space?

PEOPLE who run their own small business or are self-employed can take advantage of co-working office space from early 2018.

A unit in Franklins House, Bicester, is currently being transformed into a hot-desk style facility for up to 67 people.

Co-working offices allow people who work from home, are self-employed, or who have started small businesses to work together in a shared environment exchanging ideas and building a community.

For more information go to perchcoworking.co.uk.

Midsomer donation

MIDSOMER Tour Guides in Thame have raised £374 for the mayor's charities Red Kite Family Centre and Thame & District Day Centre.

Cllr Tom Wyse was presented with a cheque by the tour group.

The Midsomer Tours ran weekly from May to October taking in some of the landmarks from the popular TV show Midsomer Murders. They are run by trained volunteers who are members of Thame Players.

This year 200 people from the UK, Australia, Scandinavia, USA and Germany, joined the tour, proceeds from which were given to the Mayor's Charities, Thame Museum, which is a Midsomer filming location and future promotion of the walking tours.

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Advertorial

"Shoot for the moon this January!" – Oxfordshire's slimming experts say aiming high and getting support is the key to success

Local experts are urging people starting a weight loss programme this January to have faith in aiming for their ideal weight, after a study found that people who set ambitious targets lose almost twice as much weight in 12 months*.

A team of Slimming World Consultants in Oxfordshire, are preparing for a busy January as many people vow to turn their New Year's resolutions to make this the year that they achieve their dream weight. They say the latest research conducted by Slimming World shows that people in Oxfordshire shouldn't feel limited by past weight loss attempts and should instead aim high for weight they would love to be, and get the support they need to achieve it. The national study of 24,457 people with a BMI (body mass index) in the obese category looked at the impact of target setting, and found that the more ambitious the target, the more weight people lose – regardless of their starting weight.

In Oxfordshire around 56.4% of people are overweight and, nationwide, millions of people are expected to set themselves the target of losing weight this January. Amy Linsey, the Team Developer for a team of 11 consultants in Oxfordshire says our Slimming World groups are the best place to get motivational support along with care and camaraderie to learn to make simple, healthy changes to lose weight and keep it off. She says: "No dream is out of reach at Slimming World. Whether it's to lose ten pounds or ten stone, fit into a size 12 dress or a suit you've grown out of, run around with the kids or run a 10k race – together, my consultants and the members of their Slimming World group can help to get you there!

"We never tell members what they should weigh, and so all new members choose their own target weight when they join. However much you'd love to lose, we know how much more motivating it is when you're aiming for a weight you dream to be rather than a weight you're told you should be or think is easily achievable – and now we have the research to prove it!

"I know what it's like to struggle with your weight and, having lost over 3st as a Slimming World member myself after joining in 2014, I also understand what a huge difference understanding how slimmers feel and offering the right kind of support can make to your chances of achieving your weight loss goals. The consultants in the team have lost over 50st between them, and are so passionate about helping people in their local communities to do the same".

"It's my dream to see our members achieve their dreams. In our groups, members set targets, share recipes, challenges and solutions and celebrate success together, which is so important to a successful journey. It's all about support, care, encouragement and fun – and I firmly believe that's why we regularly see members achieve their weight loss dreams too. In group they learn that slimming down doesn't have to mean giving up any of their favourite foods, and in fact they can fill up on healthy, hearty, delicious meals just by making small changes to the way they are cooked and prepared. Many also find they have so much more energy, and become much more active by starting small and finding something fun – whether it's walking the kids to school, a dance class or washing the car – it all absolutely counts!"

To join one of the Oxfordshire Team's groups, which are held across the county 6 days of the week, either pop along or visit www.slimmingworld.co.uk/joining-a-group to make contact with your local consultant.

Oxfordshire Guardian Reader travel

HOTEL & TICKET PACKAGES

DIANA: HER FASHION STORY
AT KENSINGTON PALACE

Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays, March-December 2017

See this exhibition charting the fashion evolution of the late Diana, Princess of Wales, from the frills and pie-crust collars of her early days in the public eye to the elegant, sophisticated signature style of the nineties.

PRICE INCLUDES...

- Overnight stay at the 4 star Grosvenor hotel, London with full English breakfast
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2 days, from £89.95pp

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& THE GROSVENOR HOTEL

Fridays & Sundays, November & December 2017

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PRICE INCLUDES...

- Overnight stay at the 4 star Grosvenor Hotel with full English breakfast
- Timed admission ticket to the Kew Gardens Illuminated Trail

2 days, from £89.95pp

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RAF Benson personnel, from left, Padre Phil Corrigan, MAcr Gareth Attridge, Wg Cdr Andy Baron (flying suit behind the two ladies in red), SAC Alexandria Stewart (elf at the front), Eamon Geragthy (Santa, former RAF engineering warrant officer who retired recently), Cpl Andrew Mills (in Santa hat), Flt Lt Paul Mackay (flying suit and maroon Christmas jumper), Rebecca Hunt (white Christmas jumper at the front), Cpl Joanne Farrell (far right) are pictured with play specialists from the Children's Hospital, from left in red polo shirts, Samantha Mortlock, Grace Midwinter, Klarissa Burrows and Christine Turner, who helps organise the event each year, and support worker Theresa King. Pictures: *Cpl Tony Hawke*

Special delivery

FATHER Christmas abandoned his traditional sleigh in favour of a Puma HC2 helicopter last week as he dropped off presents to ill children.

Santa, his elf and helpers from RAF Benson visited children, families and staff at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Headington to spread festive joy.

During the flying visit, Santa and co brought smiles to the faces of children who will be spending Christmas on the wards by delivering gifts donated by the south Oxfordshire base's personnel and families.

The man in red touched down in style on the helipad at the hospital, which also serves the Children's Hospital, as part of an annual RAF Benson training exercise.

InBrief

Football training

PRIMARY schools in Oxford will receive on-going training from professional coaches as part of the Premier League's Primary Stars project in the New Year.

Coaches from Oxford United Football Community Trust, in partnership with Oxford City Council, will visit five schools in Blackbird Leys and Rose Hill to deliver high quality physical education to help children achieve their sporting potential.

Councillor Linda Smith, executive board member for sport, leisure and parks, said the scheme will "encourage their interest in team sports, help keep them active and nurture any hidden talent".

TV and Xbox stolen

A TELEVISION, Xbox and games were stolen from a student house in Oxford.

The offender/s climbed over a fence at the rear of the Iffley Road property between 4.30am and 8.45am on Saturday, December 9, entering via an insecure back door.

Police are now appealing for witnesses and information.

Call 101 quoting reference number 43170365986 with any information.

>> For the latest news go to oxfordshiregaurdian.co.uk

Skills shortages could affect business growth

Salaries increase but lack of suitable applicants

By Owen Hughes

OXFORD businesses face a skills shortage that could impact on growth in 2018, despite salaries across the region seeing an above-average increase.

A new report published by the professional recruiting group Hays shows that more than half of Oxford-based businesses expect their activity to increase, with four in five organisations planning to recruit over the next 12 months.

Salaries increased by around two per cent more than the UK average, but 89 per cent of employers have experienced a shortage of suitable applicants over the past year.

Almost 1,200 employers and employees in the Thames Valley region took part in the survey and more than two thirds of respondents said they have experienced moderate to extreme skills shortages, driving higher salaries.

Nearly a quarter of employees cited salary and benefits as their main reason for wanting to leave their job in the next 12 months.

More than a fifth of businesses are now recruiting temporary professionals in a bid to alleviate the mounting pressure.

Darren Montagu, regional managing director of Hays in the south, said: "Despite the economic and political uncertainty and challenges faced by UK organisations, employers across Oxford are clearly optimistic about the year ahead.

"However, skills shortages have the potential to severely limit companies' growth, hinder productivity and damage employee morale at a critical time."

He added: "We therefore suggest that organisations look to make workforce planning a key strategic priority, invest in their employer brand, and use contingent workers for more than just projects."

The highest average salary increases occurred in the construction and property industry (2.7 per cent), followed by IT (2.3 per cent) and engineering (2.2 per cent).

Cholsey & Wallingford Railway

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News

InBrief

Clearing up in blitz

THE Bretch Hill has been given a clear-up with 22 tonnes of waste removed in just a week.

Six Cherwell District Council workers cleared litter, graffiti and bulky waste as part of the blitz.

Cllr Debbie Pickford, Cherwell's lead member for clean and green, said: "Our street cleansing team put in long hours all year round keeping the district clean and during our blitz campaigns they go above and beyond the call of their ordinary duties to get our busiest areas looking spick and span."

The next neighbourhood blitz will take place from Monday, January 22, at Bure Park, Bicester.

Rescue mission

A NEW community initiative, Rescue Our Planet Earth, has collected seven bags of litter after its first tidy-up.

In two hours, the group covered a three-mile stretch around Cropredy.

As well as collecting glass bottles, jars, plastic bottles, packaging and bags, cans, cones, a tyre and scrap metal, the group said it found "loads" of dog poo bags where owners had picked up after their pet and then thrown it in the water or hedge.

>> Got a story? Call the newsdesk on 01235 516919

Den building fun whatever the weather

YOUNG adventurers can take a walk on the wild side no matter the weather thanks to a local homebuilder.

Schoolchildren from Deddington CofE Primary School's forest school were given den building equipment and a first aid kit to use for their outdoor activities.

The equipment, donated by David Wilson Homes, will allow the youngsters to explore and play in the outdoors safely in all weathers.

Steve Barton, senior sales manager at David Wilson Homes, said: "We are delighted to be funding den building equipment and a first aid kit for Deddington CofE Primary School's forest school and hope the children are making good use of their den building equipment when out in the wind and rain."

During forest school sessions, pupils aged three to five go into the school's private woodland opposite the homebuilder's Deddington Grange development in Banbury.

Headteacher Clive Evans said the scheme has enabled many children to come out of their shell, while enhancing their social, emotional and academic skills.

Give the gift of blood this Christmas

PEOPLE in Oxford can help give a valuable gift this festive season by donating blood.

The NHS Blood and Transplant centre in Headington is asking donors in the city to book an appointment to donate before Christmas to ensure hospitals can continue to treat patients during a busy period.

According to the centre, many children and adults will need transfusions over the festive period as treatment for a blood condition or cancer, or due to surgery, childbirth or an accident.

Shailesh Mistry, regional donor marketing operations manager, said: "Blood stock levels can dip over the busy festive period as Christmas shopping, celebrations and extended public holidays mean giving blood can slip off to-do lists.

"But we need our loyal donors in Oxford more than ever at this time of year."

All blood groups are being asked to make and keep their lifesaving appointment in the run up to and over Christmas, but vulnerable groups such as O negative, B negative and A negative platelets are particularly important.

To book an appointment visit www.blood.co.uk.

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ADULT (16-59 yrs) £11, SENIOR (60+ yrs) £10, CHILD £1*

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Look properly to avoid crashes, motorists told

By George Welch

FAILING to look properly is the biggest cause of collisions on the roads in Oxfordshire, according to figures from the Department for Transport.

There were 1,498 reported collisions in Oxfordshire in 2016, the 19th highest figure in England for the year.

A driver/rider failing to look properly contributed to 538 of these collisions with a further 341 caused at least in part by motorists failing to judge other drivers' path or speed.

Reckless driving on the A34 has caused multiple fatalities this year – in 2016 there were 277 incidents across the county caused by this type of driving.

Poor manoeuvring (197 collisions) and loss of control (168) rounded off the top five causes for crashes in Oxfordshire.

Maurizio Fantato, from the Witney Oxford Transport (WOT) group, which has advocated investing in new railways in order to meet planned population growth, has long called for road improvements across the county.

"It's easy to generalise, but there must be a correlation between a higher than average number of incidents in Oxfordshire and increased road usage on a poorly maintained network," he said.

"WOT has always made the case for greater provision of public transport using its own dedicated infrastructure, rather than having to share it with other road users.

"This isn't just for safety reasons, but to meet modern requirements for efficient and effective transport links."

Slippery road surfaces (150), tailgating (84), sudden braking (82), travelling too fast for the conditions (69) and pedestrians failing to look properly completed the top 10.

Mr Fantato added that a way to reduce the number of collisions is by encouraging would-be drivers to utilise alternative transport modes.

He said: "We desperately need to get more people out of their cars and on different transport modes.

"This will not only result in more manageable road traffic levels, but also less pollution, a better environment and definitely fewer accidents."

Motorists failing to look properly were the biggest cause of crashes across Great Britain, contributing to a total of 42,189 reported collisions.

The figures for Oxfordshire were compared to the other 151 local authority areas where figures are available.

Kent had the highest number of crashes with a total of 4,428.

Thousands using new River Rapids bus route already

A NEW bus route serving travellers between Oxford and Henley has been warmly received by thousands of passengers.

More than 15,000 passengers per week have used Thames Travel's River Rapids service, which passes through Wallingford, since it was launched in November.

The service, which reinstated the direct route from Oxford to Henley, also increased the frequency of buses between the two locations from every 30 to 20 minutes on Mondays to Saturdays.

Thames Travel introduced the service to promote using buses as well as improve commuter links.

Managing director Phil Southall said: "River Rapids has been warmly received by passengers. Numbers from the first month in operation are very encouraging, with more than 15,000 people now using the service per week."

Nine buses were refurbished in distinctive livery.

be hot! with Slimming World

New Groups

Didcot
Didcot Baptist Church, Wantage Road
Didcot, OX11 0BS
Wednesdays: 7.30pm
Contact Laura 07879410949

Didcot
Didcot Baptist Church, Wantage Road
Didcot, OX11 0BS
Fridays: 9.30am
Contact Kerry 07583 085780

Monday

Wantage
The Guildry, St Mary's Convent
Wantage, OX12 9DJ
Mondays: 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Contact Nicki 07596528548

Didcot
Didcot Baptist Church, Wantage Road
Didcot, OX11 0BS
Mondays: 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Contact Laura 07879410949

Abingdon
Abingdon Rugby Club, Lambrick Way
Abingdon, OX14 5TJ
Mondays: 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Contact Claire 07508202642

Tuesday

Cholsey
Cholsey Day Centre, Church Road
Cholsey, OX10 9PQ
Tuesdays: 7.30pm
Contact Bev 07895059079

Grove
The Dixon Suite, Old Mill Hall,
Grove, OX12 7LB
Tuesdays: 3.30pm, 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Contact Nicki 07596528548

Dalton Barracks
Dalton Barracks Community Centre,
Cholswell Road Abingdon OX13 6HA
Tuesdays: 5.30 pm & 7.30 pm
Contact Kev 07568 092 964

Didcot
Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road
Didcot, OX11 7JN
Tuesdays: 9.30am, 11.30am, 5pm & 7pm
Contact Carol: 07788132541

Wednesday

Faringdon
Faringdon United Church, Coxwell Street
Faringdon, SN7 7HA
Wednesdays: 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Contact Louise 07717681939

Steventon
Steventon Village Hall, The Green
Steventon, OX13 6RR
Wednesdays: 9.30am, 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Contact Nicola 07704633840

Abingdon
Tilsley Park, Dunmore Road
Abingdon, OX14 1PU
Wednesdays: 7.30pm
Contact Michele 07483 848970

Wallingford
Centre 70, Kinecroft,
Wallingford, OX10 0DT
Wednesdays: 10.00 am, 3.30pm, 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Contact Amy 07514255703

Thursday

Stanford in the Vale
CE Primary School, High Street
Stanford in the Vale, SN7 8LH
Thursdays: 7.30pm
Contact Nancy 07710177808

Abingdon
Long Furlong Community Centre, Boulter Drive
Abingdon, OX14 1XP
Thursdays: 9.30am, 11.30am, 3.15 pm, 5.00 pm & 7.00 pm
Contact Kev 07568 092964

Didcot
Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road
Didcot, OX11 7JN
Thursdays: 3.30pm, 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Contact Claire 07508202642

Faringdon
Faringdon United Church, Coxwell Street
Faringdon, SN7 7HA
Thursdays: 9.30am
Contact Louise 07717681939

Saturday

Didcot
Didcot Baptist Church, Wantage Road
Didcot, OX11 0BS
Saturdays: 7.00am, 9.00am & 11.00am (new time)
Contact Kerry 07583 085780

Abingdon
Preston Road Community Centre, Midget Close
Abingdon, OX14 5NR
Saturdays: 8.00am & 10.00am
Contact Bev 07895059079

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Christmas Menu

On Arrival

Mulled wine Or Buck Fizz

Starters

Roast pumpkin and charred onion salad (V)(GF)
Beetroot cured salmon, horseradish cream & toast.
Duck livers on brioche toast with shallot and whisky cream sauce.
Festive parsnip soup with crusty bread (V)(GF)
Sweet potato, brie and spinach tart with cranberry and mixed salad (V)

Mains

Bronze turkey with chipolata & bacon, sage & apricot stuffing, roasted potatoes & seasonal vegetables. (GF)
Veggie wellington roast red pepper, butternut squash, feta cheese, chestnuts wrapped in puff pastry: dauphinoise potatoes, spicy tomato sauce (V)
Roast cod, creamed chicory, sprouting broccoli, caper & parsley butter (GF)
Smoked duck breast salad served with mushroom dressing & madeira and balsamic vinegar reduction and pickled mushrooms, spinach and croutons (GF)
Festive beef burger topped with a pulled pork & cracked black pepper, streaky bacon and melted brie, with fries, cranberry & BBQ ketchup and sprout slaw (GF)

Desserts

Christmas pudding served with crème anglaise
Salted caramel cheesecake with fudge
Chocolate Mousse tart with Vodka Marinated Cherries
Poach mulled wine pear with Christmas pudding ice cream and honey comb and chocolate truffle (GF)
Warm Sticky Toffee pudding with vanilla ice cream (GF)

A complementary glass of either Mulled Wine or Buck Fizz on arrival.

2 Course £15.95

or

3 Course £19.95

(Minimum of four people)

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All menu choices must be pre-ordered a minimum of 10 working days in advance. For the set menu, each course choice must be accompanied by the guest name.
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Your guide for your leisure time in & around Oxfordshire

Out & About

From tragedy comes a true triumph

War Horse review – don't miss chance to see First World War drama

Join Michael Bolton for an intimate evening of music

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Out & About

Bolton comes to Oxford

Join Michael for an intimate evening of music

By Samantha McGregor

TICKETS have gone on sale for legendary singer Michael Bolton as he brings his UK tour to Oxford.

The Grammy-award winning singer will take to the New Theatre stage on February 9.

Michael, also a songwriter and social activist, has sold more than 65 million records worldwide and has won a string of awards.

His hits include How am I Supposed to Live Without You, To Love Somebody, Missing You Now, Drift Away and Soul Provider.

During his singing career he has had nine number one singles, won two Grammys for Best Pop Male Vocal Performance, six American Music Awards, and a Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

His songs have been recorded by the likes of KISS, Kanye West, Jay Z, Barbra Streisand, Cher and Marc Anthony.

Michael said: "Hello to all my UK fans. I have created an evening with Michael Bolton telling my life story. Join me for an intimate evening sharing the pictures and stories behind my music. I hope to see you there."

As a songwriter, Michael has earned more than 24 BMI & ASCAP Awards, including Songwriter of the Year, nine Million-Air awards, and the Hitmakers Award from the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

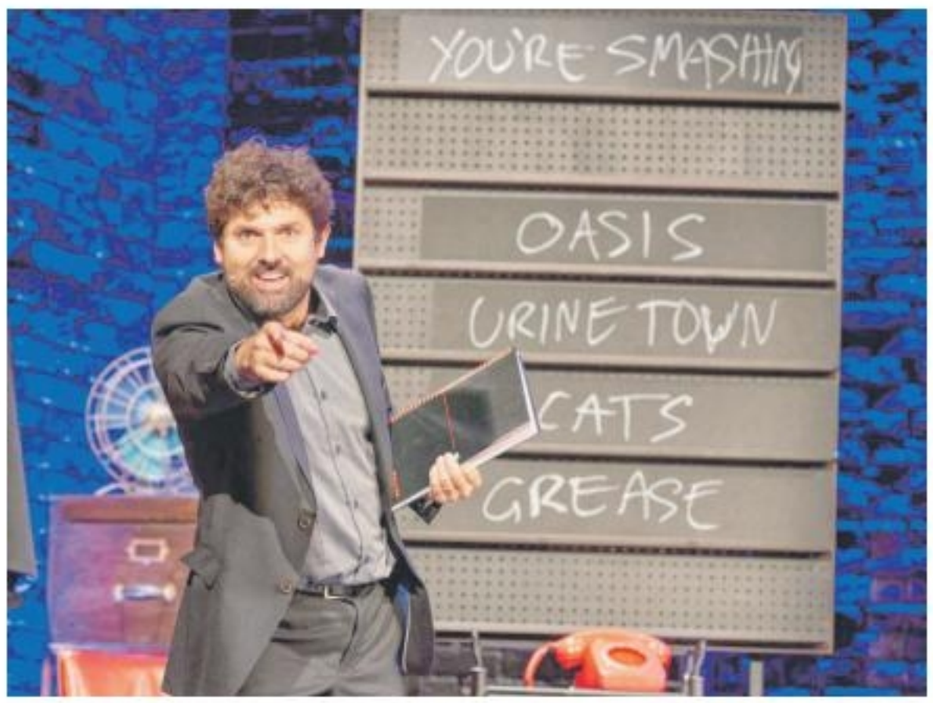
He has written with some of the greatest talents of our time, including Bob Dylan, Paul Stanley, Lady Gaga, Diane Warren and David Foster.

Michael is currently preparing to release his 27th album, called Songs of Cinema, a tribute to songs from the world's most iconic films.

As Michael continues to tour the world each year, he has performed with legends such as Luciano Pavarotti, Placido Domingo, Jose Carreras, Renee Fleming and BB King.

Aside from music, Michael has also begun to make appearances in front of the camera, including several episodes of CBS's hit series Two and a Half Men, the hit Fox network show Glee, and HBO's hit series Last Week Tonight with John Oliver.

For tickets drop into the box office in George Street, call 0844 871 3020 or view atgtickets.com/oxford



Join the cast in Oxford and help create a new musical

Get involved in Showstopper!

THE Oxford Playhouse is gearing up to launch the new year with a bang as musical comedy Showstopper returns to the city.

For one night only on January 10, Showstopper will take to the stage.

But this is no ordinary stage show, it requires the audience to help co-create the show which is different every performance.

Showstopper has been described as a playful improvised show that changes every night with "hilarious consequences".

In each performance, the actors rely on the audiences' ideas to create and develop a musical live on stage.

With a cast of seven plus a live band, audience suggestions are transformed into unpredictable all-singing and all-dancing shows.

The Olivier award-winning troupe have been an Edinburgh Festival must-see for the past decade.

Showstopper is currently enjoying a West End run at the Lyric Theatre in Shaftsbury Avenue.

Tickets for Showstopper start at £10 and are available from the box office on 01865 305305 or book online via oxfordplayhouse.com.

Suitable for age 14 upwards.

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Review: Samantha McGregor

War Horse is true theatrical triumph

WE have waited almost two years for War Horse to arrive at Oxford's New Theatre so being there on opening night was worth every minute.

What a fantastic show – worthy of its standing ovation. This show is a must see this Christmas.

The puppetry is amazing, the story telling sensational, this production is high in my top five list of must-see shows.

War Horse is based on the Michael Morpurgo book and is a tale of courage, loyalty and friendship, following the life of a young boy called Albert, played by Thomas Dennis, and his horse Joey, and is set against the backdrop of the First World War.

We loved how horses Joey and Topthorn were brought to life by the puppeteers, a shift of a head, swish of a tail, the sounds, the twitch of an ear. It was truly impressive.

The cast did a sterling job, from Joey's drunken father played by Jasper William Cartwright, to Friedrich, played by Peter Becker, and Emille, who was played by Joelle Brabban, you felt their pain and suffering, the desperation the war had created.

A mention must go to the cheeky goose – who brought a little comedy to an otherwise touching tale.

This show also brought home the horror and sorrow of the First World War, the tremendous loss of life, the impact of war not just on the men, their families and small communities, but the horses that were taken into battle as well.

It also explored the bond between horse and human, and it was that bond with Albert that eventually saved Joey.

War Horse is more poignant than ever as this tour coincides with the centenary commemorations of the end of the First World War.

Just one word of caution, watch out for the gunshots, a few of us nearly jumped out of our seats after the first few shots were fired.

The show has been seen by more than seven million people worldwide and has won 25 awards including the Tony Award for Best Play on Broadway and you can see why.

You can catch War Horse at Oxford's New Theatre until Saturday January 6.

Tickets are available from the New Theatre box office on George Street, by calling 0844 871 3020 or go to atgtickets.com/oxford

On stage

Exhibition first

Modern Art Oxford will feature the first major UK solo exhibition by Brazilian artist Cinthia Marcelle, from March 10 until May 27.

The gallery has commissioned a new site-specific installation and animation for the upper galleries.

The São Paulo based artist works with sculpture, film, performance and installation using the themes of labour, environment and social justice.

They will rock you

Tickets are on sale for tribute act Mercury Queen Tribute who come to the New Theatre on March 29.

Winners of the National Tribute Awards, the show will feature popular Queen hits, such as Bohemian Rhapsody, We Are the Champions, We Will Rock You and many more.

For tickets go to atgtickets.com/oxford

Cropredy launches

The Levellers are among the first acts announced for Fairport's Cropredy Convention 2018 festival.

The Levellers will headline the three day event on August 9, host band Fairport Convention will play two sets and on Saturday Scottish singer-songwriter Al Stewart will perform.

More acts will be announced in January. For tickets, with discounts available for early birds, go to fairport-convention.com

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Nicholls

Out&About

Rising US star set to shine

By Samantha McGregor

RISING star Courtney Marie Andrews has announced her 2018 tour dates and Oxford is her second stop.

Singer/songwriter Courtney is back and will perform at Glasgow's Celtic Connections festival, before heading south to St Barnabus Church, in St Barnabus Street, Oxford, for one night on Saturday, February 3.

Originally from Arizona, Courtney spent a decade touring solo and with large pop bands, but felt the need for a break, she missed America, was going through a personal heartbreak and so bid farewell to the music industry and moved to a small rural town in the deep forests of Washington State.

However, she re-emerged in 2016 with a new fire and a new album and released Honest Life, a mixture of indie-folk and Americana with a country flavour reminiscent of her Southwestern roots.

Celebrating the recent release of a video for Irene from Honest Life, she describes the tune as an "anthem for the timid, a beautiful hymn to bolster confidence and believe in your potential".

Courtney said: "Irene is the little voice inside most of us, that says we aren't good enough, or strong enough.

"It's about shutting that voice off, while also accepting life's inevitable struggles. It's about coming to terms with who you are, and believing in that person.

"Irene was written for a friend who was going through a confusing time, but like some songs do, over time it turned into a song about not only myself, but all of the women that I love. Irene is amazing, she just doesn't know it yet."

Following on from the success in Europe, Honest Life has been re-released and includes a bonus 7" of unreleased recordings.

Once her spring tour has been completed, Courtney will return in August/September for a UK and European tour, including two London dates and the End of The Road Festival on September 2.

Andrews returned from a successful tour with Joe Pug in Australia and a North American tour with Hamilton Leithauser.

For more information and tickets view wegottickets.com

Slade's seasonal greeting

Wolverhapton glam-rock legends Slade will take to the Oxford stage tonight to wish revellers Merry Christmas Everybody.

With new lead singer Mal McNulty at the helm, replacing Noddy Holder, alongside founder Slade members Dave Hill and Don Powell and former Mud guitarist John Berry, the band play Oxford's O2 Academy.

A firm favourite with the nation thanks to their blend of pop and rock 'n' roll, Slade have had 23 top 20 singles and six that hit the number one spot.

So, the gig promises to be one to remember as the boys belt out tunes from the band's 30-year repertoire.

Firm favourites include Cum On Feel The Noize and Coz I Luv You which are two Slade tunes featured today in TV commercials for some of the world's biggest companies.

Slade first hit the road in 1966, touring throughout Great Britain and Europe and achieved their first chart hit in May 1971 with the Bobby Marchan song Get Down and Get With It followed by many more.

After an appearance at Reading Rock Festival to a 100,000 audience, the band stole the show and built up a whole new group of fans.

Tunes including We'll Bring The House Down, My Oh My, Run Run Away, Mama We'er All Crazee Now, and what else but Merry Christmas Everybody followed.

For tickets call 0844 477 1000 or go to o2academy.com/oxford

Out&About Competition

WIN tickets to "Icons of the 80s" at The New Theatre, Oxford

Closing date: Thursday, January 11, 2018

Entertainers is proud to bring together your favourite eighties artists all on one stage! The latest line-up includes Go West, Nik Kershaw and Cutting Crew together in one unique concert

The eighties are back and these legendary stars have joined forces for a truly incredible, once in a lifetime, concert experience at Oxford's New Theatre on January 18th at 7.30pm.

With millions of albums sales and hits like We Close Our Eyes, Call Me, King Of Wishful Thinking, Wouldn't It Be Good, The Riddle, I Won't Let The Sun Go Down On Me, I've Been In Love Before and the classic (I Just) Died In Your Arms, this authentic 80s triple header is not to be missed.

Go West It has been over 30 years since Go West had their first hit single We Close Our Eyes. Other hits followed including Call Me, Goodbye Girl and Don't Look Down, Faithful and the smash hit theme song in the film Pretty Woman King of Wishful Thinking.

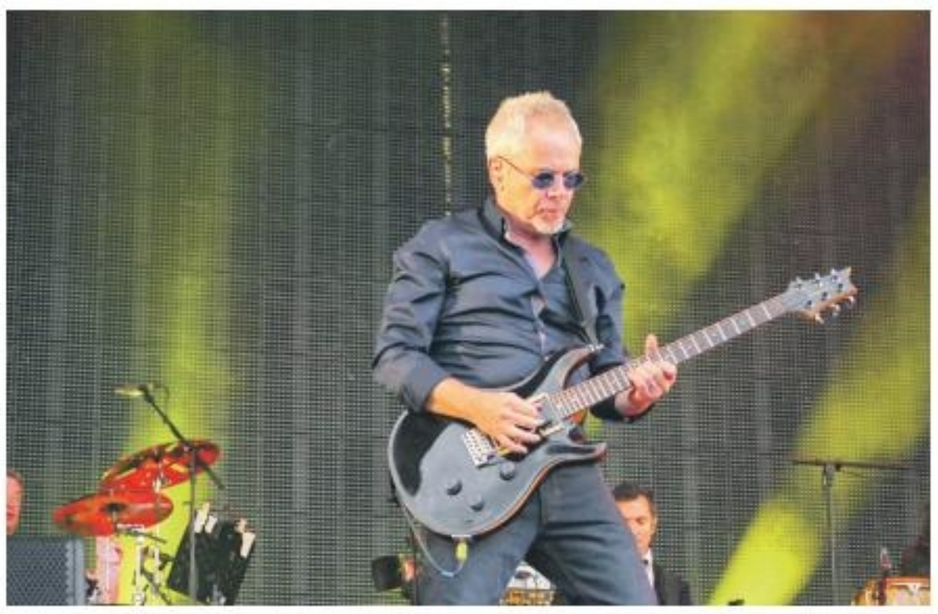
Nik Kershaw Nik Kershaw first achieved chart success in 1984 with Wouldn't It Be Good?, followed by other classics such as Won't Let the Sun Go Down on Me and The Riddle. A prolific writer for other artists, Nik also penned the number one single The One and Only for Chesney Hawkes.

Cutting Crew Originally formed in the mid-80s, this Grammy nominated, Anglo-Canadian rock band will always be remembered for their classic song (I Just) Died In Your Arms, which helped define the musical sounds of the club scene during the eighties and is still played widely today. Over twenty years later, with millions of album sales, original singer/songwriter Nick Van Eede has signed new recording publishing deals and is back on the road promoting his awesome new material.

Win tickets!

We have a pair of tickets to this great show at The New Theatre and to be in with a chance of winning all you have to do is answer the following simple question:

Q: When did Nik Kershaw first chart with Wouldn't It Be good?



To enter this competition and more like it, go online to
www.oxfordshireguardian.co.uk
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FENCING FEATURE ADVERTISEMENT

"I honestly believe that Colourfence is the best general purpose fencing product on the market today!"

Get ready for Winter

Now's the perfect time to replace your garden fence once and for all. Anna Ryder Richardson - Designer and Television Presenter - takes a closer look at Colourfence, the revolutionary low-maintenance system.

It's been ten years since I regularly graced TV screens helping transform people's living spaces with MDF and stripped floorboards. Recently it's been more "celebrity muck out" than "celebrity make-over" as I took up the challenge of owning my own Wildlife Zoo in Tenby. In this time I've learnt quiet a lot about fences and having researched the various options for my own benefit I thought I would share my knowledge with a wider audience.

The latest design processes mean there is now a tremendous array of fencing products for you to choose from, constructed from a variety of materials. Each has its own attributes, and ultimately it can often come down to a matter of personal preference. For me, there was one unique system that stood out as providing the best balance between price and functionality which eradicates fencing problems for good. Or for at least 25 years. Colourfence. For quality, value, longevity, aesthetic design, this fencing system ticks all the boxes. Fencing made for the 21st century that will transform the look of your garden which is supplied and fitted by a company whose customer service is as good as the product.

In my view, Colourfence is the 'Rolls Royce' of fencing – just without the exclusive price tag. What's more, it's guaranteed to stay in place in up to 130mph winds and is virtually maintenance free.

To find out how the experts from Colourfence might help you, I suggest you call **01865 582 171** and speak to their team.

Colourfence: The ultimate garden fence?

For many Colourfence is perhaps the ultimate choice. For the last 15 years it's been widely used across the UK and has steadily gained a reputation for its quality. By using the highest specification Colorbond steel in the fence structure itself, complemented by the highest level of customer service from accredited Franchisees, Colourfence is now regarded by many as the premier fencing solution in the market. Immune to the rot and resistant to the weather that so quickly effects wooden fences, Colourfence has none of the drawbacks of wood - plenty of additional benefits and what's more it's better value!

Call **01865 582 171** for more information

Gardeners' Questions

Q Wooden fence panels just don't seem to last - is there a storm resistant alternative?

A The Colourfence system has been tested under cyclonic conditions to withstand storms with wind gusts up to 130mph. Unlike your wooden fence - once professionally installed - Colourfence really will stay up!

Q No matter what I treat my wooden fence with - nothing seems to prevent it rotting or looking shabby for very long.

A Treating your fence is a thankless and expensive task. It's also a losing battle. Wood simply want's to rot. Colourfence offers a low-maintenance alternative where by an occasional wash down will keep it looking great for up to 25 years! GUARANTEED!†

THIS WEEK'S JOB

†Terms and conditions apply - full details available on request

Head into Winter - with COLOURFENCE

The only garden fence you will ever need!

Every gardener knows that it pays to plan ahead. If you are one of the thousands of people who watched helpless, as winter winds battered their garden, it will not be a surprise that garden fences are almost always the first casualty. Whether you have previously patched, painted or simply prayed to keep your fence going, there's no escaping the fact that timber fences will always fall victim to the weather. With Colourfence you can put your garden straight once and for all. Colourfence is scientfically tested and cyclonically rated to ensure when professionally installed, it can withstand wind gusts of up to 130mph. Once it's up – it stays up and is guaranteed to look good year after year. Safe, extra secure and hassle free – you will NEVER need to paint it, treat it or patch it. An occasional hose down will be all you need do to keep it in top condition for years to come. In fact the system is so durable that Colourfence will guarantee† their fencing to last at least 25 years. Available in a range of colours to suit any garden, with or without decorative trellis, the highly skilled installation team make short work of their dramatic transformations. Your sad old fence will be e_ ciently cleared and replaced, leaving you to get back to enjoying your rejuvenated garden. Pricing is just as straightforward and equally attractive. Starting costs are in line with inferior timber systems but with no annual treatments required, Colourfence saves you time and money each and every year. Their aim is your peace of mind. With a 25 year guarantee† Colourfence speaks for itself and promises a lifetime of hassle-free enjoyment.

For more information and to arrange a FREE no obligation site visit simply call one of their helpful team on 01865 582 171.

COLOURFENCE

the revolutionary low-maintenance system

01865 582 171

colourfence.co.uk

†Terms and conditions apply - full details available on request

In detail:

- Virtually Maintenance-free.
- Save time & money - no treating required.
- Guaranteed† not to rot, warp or peel for up to 25 years.
- Costs in line with far inferior timber systems
  Variety of colours and sizes available
- Professionally installed by accredited Franchisees

Colourfence is built to last!

NO PRESSURE PROMISE

To reassure customers that our free no obligation site survey and quotation is not a precursor to high pressure sales techniques, all Colourfence Franchisees have signed up to the Colourfence No Pressure Promise. Call or visit our website for details.

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puzzle drome

Your weekly puzzle challenge

CROSS CODE

21	25	3	11	5	7	10	1	■	9	25	8	15
25	■	10	■	1	■	10	■	20	■	1	■	23
25	2	2	16	23	13	13	■	8	18	11	19	6
19	■	14	■	14	■	4	■	11	■	14	■	24
■	23	10	14	11	4	■	4	9	1	23	15	10
14	■	■	■	9	21	10	10	17	■	24	■	18
1	23	19	5	■	25	1	10	■	13	11	4	5
23	■	23	■	4	3	23	24	15	■	■	■	4
9	1	11	4	11	4	■	4	13	23	26	10	■
10	■	13	■	18	■	22	■	10	■	23	■	1
19	13	8	17	10	■	11	18	2	8	13	14	10
8	■	1	■	3	■	18	■	14	■	10	■	13
13	11	10	8	■	10	12	15	10	1	5	13	6

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4 S	5	6	7	8	9	10	11 I	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24 M	25	26

Each number in our Cross Code grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. You have three letters in the control grid to start you off. Enter them in the appropriate squares in the main grid, then use your knowledge of words to work out which letters should go in the missing squares.

As you get the letters, fill in other squares with the same number in the main grid and control grid. Check off the alphabetical list of letters as you identify them.

MAGIC SQUARE

SPOT THE SHOWPIECE

Using all 16 letters of the phrase above, form four words each of four letters which will fit in the grid to form a magic square in which the words can be read both horizontally and vertically.

Quiz Challenge

1. What was classical composer Beethoven's first name?
2. Who did Harriet Harman succeed as deputy leader of the Labour Party in 2007?
3. The great saphenous is the longest what in the human body?
4. What CF is another term for shell shock, a reaction of some soldiers to the trauma of battle?
5. In which English city would you find Addenbrooke's Hospital?
6. Pickett's Charge was a defining moment of which battle of the American Civil War?
7. In which country was All Saints singer Nicole Appleton born in 1974?
8. What position in ballet is also the title of a 1966 film thriller starring Gregory Peck and Sophia Loren?
9. In which country are the cities Varna and Burgas?
10. The Titanic ocean-liner visited which French port on its maiden voyage?

NONAGRAM

R	I	C
A	D	O
T	I	N

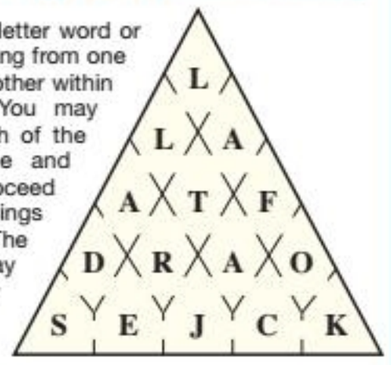
How many words of four letters or more can you make from this Nonagram? Each word must use the central letter, and each letter may be used only once. At least one word using all nine letters can be found.

Guidelines:
26 Good; 31 Very Good; 36 Excellent.

Any word found in the Concise Oxford Dictionary (Tenth Edition) is eligible with the following exceptions: proper nouns; plural nouns, pronouns and possessives; third person singular verbs; hyphenated words; contractions and abbreviations; vulgar slang words; variant spellings of the same word (where another variant is also eligible).

WORD PYRAMID

Spell out a 15-letter word or phrase by moving from one chamber to another within the pyramid. You may only enter each of the chambers once and may only proceed through openings in the walls. The first letter may appear in any chamber.

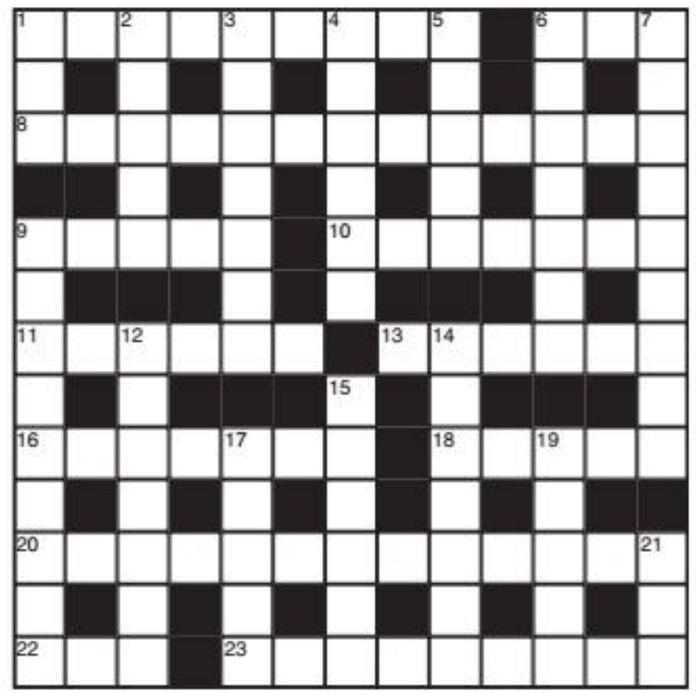


FIVE ALIVE

JV	EU	GR	OA	RN
UE	■	AI	■	AE
RI	AN	FD	IT	SA
SC	■	AT	■	AP
EY	UA	RS	TE	LS

Here are two miniature five-square crosswords using the same grid – but the letters have been mixed up. You have to work out which letters belong to which crossword.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1. Flower which wins a prize at the dairy show? (9)
6. Say nothing for conceit (3)
8. Not turning to crime? (5,8)
9. Another girl replaced Alice (5)
10. Military duty causes tiredness (7)
11. Shrewd union leader in disorganised state (6)
13. Transport found in lowland Austria (6)
16. Most eager to be having the best sight (7)
18. Tea in a series of shops (5)
20. Philosopher encountered a doctor (13)
22. Born of woman (3)
23. Thief unusually silent going round the bend (9)

DOWN

1. Being not in, ask earnestly (3)
2. It will shortly be a woven fabric (5)
3. Implant engineer on floating logs (7)
4. Exclude copper, a well-dressed person (3,3)
5. Design the first factory (5)
6. Busy and soon to be married (7)
7. About to go off round the corner (2,3,4)
9. Burglar – or comedian? (9)
12. Rewrite letters of support (7)
14. Attribute to an ancient writer (7)
15. One who is not going, the persistent sort (6)
17. Banish former Portuguese leader with the Spanish (5)
19. Plea put forward by one after dodging bail (5)
21. It is clear a number turned up (3)

SUDOKU

Easy Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9, and so must each 3 x 3 box. **Hard**

	8			1	2	6		4
	9	7	4					2
2	1		6	7	5			
	7				9	4	2	6
9		5	8		4	3	1	
						5	9	
	4	6						
		8			1	2		9
3	2						4	1

3				7				
		6			1			2
		4		8			6	
		5				2		3
1	9				7	5		
			4					
		8	9					1
	4				3			
	7			6			2	

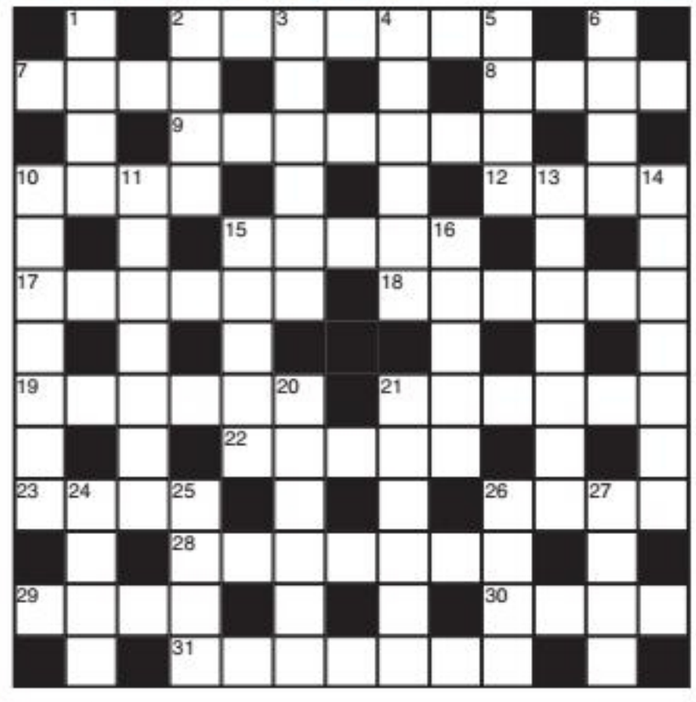
EQUALISER

10 4
14 ○ 2 ○ 2
2 2
4 ○ 2 ○ 4
4 4

Place the four signs (add, subtract, multiply, divide) one in each circle so that the total of each across and down line is the same.

Perform the first calculation in each line first and ignore the mathematical law which says you should always perform division and multiplication before addition and subtraction.

QUICK CROSSWORD



ACROSS

2. Nevertheless (7)
7. Region (4)
8. Test (4)
9. Pasta dish (7)
10. Seabird (4)
12. Glide smoothly (4)
15. Ground wheat (5)
17. Merely (6)
18. Duty schedule (6)
19. Lined up (2,1,3)
21. Penetrate (6)
22. Waste pipe (5)
23. Developed (4)
26. Lump of earth (4)
28. Small number (7)
29. Norwegian capital (4)
30. Frightful (4)
31. Accomplish (7)

DOWN

1. Pakistani language (4)
2. Foyer (4)
3. Sagaciously (6)
4. Energy (6)
5. Coral ridge (4)
6. Starchy cereal (4)
10. Breathing in gulps (7)
11. Fizzy drink (7)
13. Word for word (7)
14. Missile payload (7)
15. Deluge (5)
16. Red-breasted bird (5)
20. Sprain (6)
21. Nonsense (6)
24. English national flower (4)
25. Command to stop (4)
26. Hint (4)
27. Eye lecherously (4)

All puzzles on this page are supplied by puzzle drome Sirius Media Services. To try more of our puzzles interactively online go to www.puzzledrome.com

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SOLUTIONS

QUIZ CHALLENGE: 1 Ludwig; 2 John Prescott; 3 Vein; 4 Combat fatigue; 5 Cambridge; 6 Battle of Gettysburg; 7 Canada; 8 Arabesque; 9 Bulgaria; 10 Cherbourg.

CROSS CODE

1 R	2 D	3	4 W	5 S	6 T	7 Y	8 Z	9 C	10 E	11 I	12 X	13 L
14 G	15 P	16 B	17 K	18 N	19 F	20 Q	21 H	22 J	23 A	24 M	25 O	26 V

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD:

Across – 1 Buttercup; 6 Ego; 8 Going straight; 9 Celia; 10 Fatigue; 11 Astute; 13 Landau; 16 Keenest; 18 Chain; 20 Metaphysician; 22 Nile; 23 Lancelot.

Down – 1 Bag; 2 Twill; 3 Engrait; 4 Cut off; 5 Plant; 6 Engaged; 7 On the turn; 9 Cracksman; 12 Trestle; 14 Ascribe; 15 Stayer; 17 Expel; 19 Alibi; 21 Net.

QUICK CROSSWORD:

Across – 2 However; 7 Area; 8 Exam; 9 Lasagne; 10 Gull; 12 Flow; 15 Flour; 17 Simply; 18 Roster; 19 In a row; 21 Pierce; 22 Drain; 23 Grew; 26 Clod; 28 Handful; 29 Oslo; 30 Ugly; 31 Achieve.

Down – 1 Urdu; 2 Hall; 3 Wisely; 4 Vigour; 5 Reef; 6 Sago; 10 Gasping; 11 Limeade; 13 Literal; 14 Warhead; 15 Flood; 16 Robin; 20 Wrench; 21 Pillie; 24 Rose; 25 Whoa; 26 Clue; 27 Ogle.

EASY SUDOKU

5	8	3	9	1	2	6	7	4
6	9	7	4	8	3	1	5	2
2	1	4	6	7	5	9	8	3
8	7	1	5	3	9	4	2	6
9	6	5	8	2	4	3	1	7
4	3	2	1	6	7	5	9	8
1	4	6	2	9	8	7	3	5
7	5	8	3	4	1	2	6	9
3	2	9	7	5	6	8	4	1

HARD SUDOKU

3	1	9	2	7	6	4	5	8
7	8	6	5	4	1	9	3	2
2	5	4	3	8	9	1	6	7
4	6	5	1	9	8	2	7	3
1	9	3	6	2	7	5	8	4
8	2	7	4	3	5	6	1	9
6	3	8	9	5	2	7	4	1
5	4	2	7	1	3	8	9	6
9	7	1	8	6	4	3	2	5

MAGIC SQUARE: west; echo; ship; tope.

EQUALISER: Clockwise from top left – add; divide; multiply; subtract. Total: 8.

WORD PYRAMID: Jack of all trades.

FIVE ALIVE:

(1) Across – Juror; India; Yurts.
Down – Juicy; Radar; Reaps.
(2) Across – Vegan; Rafts; Easel.
Down – Verse; Gifts; Nasal.

NONAGRAM: acid; acrid; adit; adorn; adroit; anodic; arid; aroid; cadi; canid; card; cardio; carotid; coda; cord; crinoid; decoit; danio; dam; dart; diatonic; dicot; diction; dinar; dint; dirt; doit; drain; drat; droit; idiot; INDICATOR; indict; indri; inroad; nadir; nard; octad; ordain; radio; radon; rad; randi; rand; rind; road; toad; tornadic; trad; triad; triadic; trod.

Saturday December 23rd

BBC 1

TOP TV

2.50pm Frozen

MORNING

9.30am Saturday Kitchen
11.00am Mary Berry's Christmas Party

AFTERNOON

12.00pm Football Focus
1.00pm BBC News
1.10pm Weather
1.15pm Cool Runnings
2.50pm Frozen
4.20pm Final Score
5.30pm Len Goodman's Partners in Rhyme Christmas Special

EVENING

6.00pm BBC News
6.10pm Regional News
6.13pm Weather
6.15pm Pointless Celebrities Christmas Special
7.10pm Even Better Than the Real Thing - Christmas Special
8.05pm Casualty
8.55pm Miranda
9.30pm Our Friend Victoria Christmas Special
10.10pm BBC News
10.25pm Weather
10.30pm Match of the Day

BBC 2

TOP TV

1.40pm The Millionaire's Gift Guide

MORNING

8.30am The Big Family Cooking Showdown
9.30am The Muppets
11.10am Nature's Wildest Weapons: Horns, Tusks and Antlers: Natural World

AFTERNOON

12.10pm Mary Berry's Absolute Christmas Favourites
12.40pm Nigella's Christmas Table
1.40pm The Millionaire's Gift Guide
2.40pm Talking Pictures
3.10pm Mildred Pierce
5.00pm Natural World

EVENING

6.00pm Bill
7.30pm Sir Lenny Henry: A Life on Screen
8.30pm Dad's Army
9.00pm Feud: Bette and Joan
10.35pm What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?
12.45am Absolutely Fashion
1.45am Mary Berry's Christmas Party
2.45am This is BBC Two
6.15am Nature's Weirdest Events

ITV

TOP TV

4.30pm Despicable Me

MORNING

8.55am Scrambled! Sketch Show
9.25am ITV News
9.30am Saturday Morning with James Martin at Christmas
11.25am Gino's Italian Coastal Escape
11.55am Countrywise

AFTERNOON

12.25pm ITV News
12.35pm Tipping Point
1.35pm Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone
4.30pm Despicable Me

EVENING

6.30pm Regional News and Weather
6.40pm ITV News
7.00pm You've Been Framed!
7.30pm Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
8.00pm The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies
10.35pm ITV News
10.55pm Miranda: Morecambe and Wise and Me
12.40am Jackpot247
3.00am The Hungry Sailors
3.50am ITV Nightscreen
6.00am Sooty

Channel 4

TOP TV

5.10pm Gogglesprogs Christmas Special

MORNING

7.30am Rugrats the Movie
9.00am The Boxtrolls
10.55am Toy Story That Time Forgot
11.20am Toy Story Toons
11.55am Toy Story of Terror

AFTERNOON

12.20pm Father Christmas
12.50pm Ice Age: A Mammoth Christmas
1.20pm The Simpsons
3.00pm The World's Most Expensive Christmas
4.00pm Kirstie's Handmade Christmas
5.00pm Channel 4 News
5.10pm Gogglesprogs Christmas Special

EVENING

6.10pm Crocodile Dundee
8.00pm The World's Best Christmas Lights: From Liverpool to Bethlehem
9.00pm The Wolverine
11.20pm Gladiator
2.10am Hollyoaks Omnibus
4.45am Location, Location, Location
5.40am The Little Penguin Pororo's Racing Adventure

Channel 5

TOP TV

10.15am The Gadget Show

MORNING

9.05am Shimmer and Shine
9.15am Digby Dragon
9.30am Peppa Pig
9.40am Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
10.15am The Gadget Show
11.05am A Christmas Story

AFTERNOON

12.55pm A Heavenly Christmas
2.40pm Scrooge
3.40pm 5 News
3.45pm Scrooge
5.00pm Elf: The Musical

EVENING

8.00pm Blind Date
9.00pm Cruising with Jane McDonald
10.00pm Jane and Friends at Christmas
10.55pm Chas and Dave's Christmas Knees-Up
11.50pm Football on 5
1.15am Super Casino
3.10am Our Dream Hotel
4.00am GPs: Behind Closed Doors
4.50am Access
4.55am House Doctor
5.20am Wildlife SOS
5.45am Chinese Food in Minutes
6.00am Little Princess

Home Owners aged 50+

Protect your home from future care home fees

"We've worked hard and saved all our lives. Why should the Local Authority get it all?"

Does this sound familiar?

"We have made our Wills, leaving everything to each other and then to the children."

These are known as Mirror Wills. Sounds reassuring enough, doesn't it? But your children could in fact end up with very little or even nothing at all.

If your surviving spouse has to go into care, they will have to use all their assets to pay for their care until they get down to their last £14,250. It is therefore not a good idea to leave your half share of the home to your surviving partner but instead leave them the use of your share. This can be achieved by making new Property Trust Wills. These legitimate steps must be taken while you are both alive and in reasonable good mental health. It is therefore important for couples to **act now!**

Most of our clients come to us having already made standard Mirror Wills or have been meaning to make a Will but simply haven't got around to it. With Property Trust Wills, yourself and your spouse/partner each leave your half share of the home to the children in Trust but state that they are not to receive it during the lifetime of the surviving spouse/partner. This half would then NOT be included in any future means test calculations for care fees. The surviving spouse is free to sell their share of the home, raise cash or move house. Your children are powerless to intervene but simply have to wait for their inheritance, as they would have done previously.

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April King has 29 offices across the Midlands.
Your local office is: Prama House, 267 Banbury Road, Summertown, Oxford OX2 7HT

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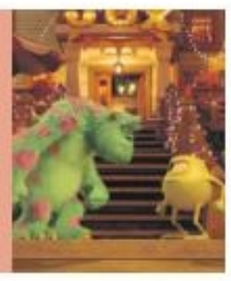
Sunday December 24th - Christmas Eve

BBC 1

TOP TV

2.20pm Monsters University



MORNING

7.25am Match of the Day
9.05am Planes
10.30am The Santa Clause

AFTERNOON

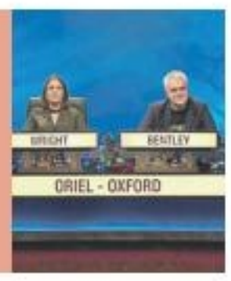
12.00pm Life in the Snow
1.00pm BBC News
1.15pm Songs of Praise
1.45pm The Farmer's Llamas
2.15pm Hammy's Boomerang Adventure
2.20pm Monsters University
3.55pm Doodlebugs
4.10pm Home
5.35pm BBC News
5.50pm Regional News & weather

EVENING

6.00pm Countryfile
7.00pm Mary, Mel and Sue's Big Christmas Thank You
8.00pm EastEnders
8.30pm Michael Mcintyre's Big Christmas Show
9.35pm Not Going Out
10.15pm BBC News
10.25pm Weather
10.30pm The Vicar of Dibley
11.15pm The Two Ronnies Sketchbook
11.45pm Midnight Mass From Leeds Cathedral
1.00am Great Expectations

BBC 2

8.00pm Christmas University Challenge 2017



MORNING

7.00am An Island Parish
7.30am The Prince and Me
9.15am The Big Family Cooking Showdown
10.15am Saturday Kitchen Best Bites
11.45am Mary Berry's Absolute Christmas Favourites

AFTERNOON

12.20pm The Hairy Bikers Home for Christmas
1.20pm Alex Polizzi's Perfect Christmas
2.20pm Cheetahs
3.20pm Guys and Dolls
5.45pm Carols from King's

EVENING

7.00pm Dad's Army
8.00pm Christmas University Challenge 2017
8.30pm Winter's Weirdest Events
9.30pm The Great Gatsby
11.55pm Christmas TOTP2 Special
1.25am Whitney "Can I be Me"
3.05am Holby City
4.05am This is BBC Two
6.10am The Hairy Bikers Home for Christmas

ITV

5.50pm A Christmas Chase: Celebrity Special

MORNING

8.10am Horrid Henry
8.25am Make it Pop
8.55am Scrambled!
9.25am Save Money: Good Food
9.55am Jack Frost
11.50am Catchphrase

AFTERNOON

12.45pm ITV News
12.55pm Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets
4.00pm Cannonball Christmas Special
5.00pm You've Been Framed!
5.30pm Regional News and Weather
5.35pm ITV News
5.50pm A Christmas Chase: Celebrity Special

EVENING

6.40pm All Star Musicals
8.30pm Maigret in Montmartre
10.25pm ITV News
10.45pm A Night for the Emergency Services
11.45pm Christmas Carols on ITV
12.45am Casino Royale
3.00am ITV Nightscreen
5.00am The Aquabats! Super Show!
5.25am Make it Pop
5.45am Mr. Bean
6.00am Sooty
6.10am Oddbods
6.15am Om Nom Stories

Channel 4

5.55pm The Snowman and the Snowdog

MORNING

7.00am Rugrats in Paris: The Movie
8.15am The Big Bang Theory
9.05am Jamie's Quick and Easy Food
9.40am Christmas Brunch

AFTERNOON

12.40pm Paul Hollywood
1.10pm Jamie's Italian Christmas
2.10pm The Simpsons
3.35pm The Borrowers
5.20pm The Snowman
5.55pm The Snowman and the Snowdog

EVENING

6.20pm Channel 4 News
6.30pm The Muppet Christmas Carol
8.00pm Child Genius v Celebrities Christmas Special
9.00pm Gogglebox 2017
11.05pm The Inbetweeners
1.35am Man Down
2.00am The Last Leg Christmas Special
2.55am The Crystal Maze
3.50am Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA
4.40am Location, Location, Location
5.35am Four in a Bed
6.00am Rugrats Go Wild

Channel 5

6.00pm Agatha Christie's Crooked House

MORNING

8.20am Noddy: Toyland Detective
8.35am Nella the Princess Knight
8.55am Digby Dragon
9.05am Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom
9.20am Gone with the Wind

AFTERNOON

1.35pm Oklahoma!
4.15pm Scrooge

EVENING

6.00pm Agatha Christie's Crooked House
8.00pm The Yorkshire Vet
9.00pm Andre Rieu: My Life in Music
10.20pm Andre Rieu: Christmas in London
11.30pm An Audience with Donny and Marie
12.35am Lip Sync Battle UK
1.00am Super Casino
3.05am Love/Hate
4.00am My Mum's Hotter Than Me!
4.50am House Doctor
5.15am Access

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Monday December 25th - Christmas Day

BBC 1

TOP TV

3.00pm The Queen's Christmas Broadcast

MORNING

9.00am Snow Queen
9.45am Go Jetters
10.00am Christmas Morning From All Saints Fulham
11.00am The Madagascar Penguins In A Christmas Caper
11.10am Snow Chick: A Penguin's Tale

AFTERNOON

12.10pm BBC News
12.20pm Top of the Pops
1.20pm Toy Story 3
3.00pm The Queen's Christmas Broadcast
3.10pm Cinderella
4.45pm The Highway Rat
5.15pm BBC News
5.25pm Weather
5.30pm Doctor Who

EVENING

6.30pm Strictly Come Dancing
7.40pm Call the Midwife
9.00pm EastEnders
10.00pm Mrs. Brown's Boys
10.35pm 300 Years of French and Saunders
11.25pm BBC News
11.35pm Weather
11.40pm On Christmas Night
11.45pm Have I Got a Bit More 2017 News for You
12.30am Darcey Bussell
1.30am Weather for the Week Ahead
1.35am BBC News

BBC 2

TOP TV

4.30pm Dame Vera Lynn: Happy 100th Birthday

MORNING

7.10am An Island Parish
7.40am Bee Movie
9.00am The Big Family Cooking Showdown
10.00am Harry Potter: A History of Magic
11.00am Carols from King's

AFTERNOON

12.15pm The Importance of Being Earnest
1.40pm BBC Proms 2017
4.30pm Dame Vera Lynn: Happy 100th Birthday
5.30pm The Queen's Christmas Broadcast
5.35pm The Morecambe and Wise Christmas Show 1977

EVENING

6.45pm Winter's Weirdest Events
7.45pm Dad's Army
8.25pm Upstart Crow
9.00pm Sir Tom Jones and Beverley Knight's Gospel Christmas
10.00pm Judi Dench : All the World's Her Stage
11.05pm Mrs. Henderson Presents
12.45am My Week with Marilyn
2.15am This is BBC Two
6.15am Celebrity Antiques Road Trip

ITV

TOP TV

3.10pm Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban

MORNING

7.05am Horrid Henry
7.30am Scrambled!
9.25am National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation
11.10am Mr Bean's Holiday

AFTERNOON

12.50pm Santa Claus
3.00pm HM the Queen
3.10pm Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban
5.50pm Emmerdale

EVENING

6.50pm ITV Evening News
7.00pm Paul O'Grady: For The Love of Dogs
8.00pm Coronation Street
9.00pm Victoria
11.00pm ITV News
11.15pm The Holiday
1.45am The Dam Busters
3.50am ITV Nightscreen
6.00am Sooty
6.10am Oddbods
6.15am Om Nom Stories
6.20am Share a Story
6.25am Almost Naked Animals

Channel 4

TOP TV

2.30pm The Alternative Christmas Message

MORNING

7.20am The Bear
7.45am Prep and Landing
8.40am Ice Age: A Mammoth Christmas
9.05am The Simpsons
11.05am Dr. Seuss' the Lorax

AFTERNOON

12.45pm The Snowman
1.20pm The Snowman and the Snowdog
1.55pm Father Christmas
2.25pm Channel 4 News
2.30pm The Alternative Christmas Message
2.35pm Scrooged
4.30pm Dumbo
5.50pm Home Alone

EVENING

7.40pm The Great Christmas Bake Off
9.00pm First Dates at Christmas
10.00pm Alan Carr's Christmas Chatty Man
12.00am George Michael
1.40am George Michael
2.45am The Crystal Maze
3.40am Location, Location, Location
4.35am Four in a Bed
5.00am Kirstie's Handmade Christmas
5.20am Moomins on the Riviera
6.40am Song of the Sea

Channel 5

TOP TV

6.00pm Elf: The Musical

MORNING

8.00am Digby Dragon
8.15am Shimmer and Shine
8.30am Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom
8.50am Mofy
8.55am Scrooge
11.05am Seven Brides for Seven Brothers

AFTERNOON

1.05pm Singin' in the Rain
3.10pm Oliver!

EVENING

6.00pm Elf: The Musical
9.00pm The Morecambe and Wise Story: Look Back in Laughter
10.55pm Britain's Best Loved Double Acts
12.05am Steptoe and Son
1.45am Super Casino
3.05am Love/Hate
4.00am Now That's Funny!
4.45am House Doctor
5.10am HouseBusters
5.35am Wildlife SOS
6.00am Puffin Rock
6.05am Poppy Cat
6.20am Simon

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MPG figures are official EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Models shown All-New Picanto 'GT-Line' 1.0 66bhp 5-speed manual at £12,000 including optional chargeable Clear White paint at £250. All-New Picanto range available from £9,450. All-New Kia Rio 'Pulse' 1.25 83bhp 5-speed manual ISG Limited Edition at £14,595. All-New Kia Rio range available from £11,995. Specification varies across the range and is subject to change without notice. *At point of purchase. Care-3 is the Kia servicing package that covers recommended manufacturers servicing. Please visit kia.com/uk or contact your Kia Dealer for full details and exclusions. T&Cs apply. Subject to status. 18s or over. Guarantee may be required. Kia Finance RH2 9AQ.
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Tuesday December 26th - Boxing Day

BBC 1

TOP TV

1.45pm Stick Man

MORNING

9.00am Tinker Bell and the Legend of Neverbeast
10.10am Planes: Fire and Rescue
11.25am Mary, Mel and Sue's Big Christmas Thank You

AFTERNOON

12.25pm BBC News
12.35pm Regional News
12.40pm Weather
12.45pm Judi Dench: My Passion for Trees
1.45pm Stick Man
2.10pm Shaun the Sheep Movie
3.30pm Doodlebugs
3.45pm Mary Poppins

EVENING

6.00pm BBC News
6.20pm Regional News
6.25pm Weather
6.30pm Snow Bears
7.30pm EastEnders
8.00pm Little Women
9.00pm The Miniaturist
10.30pm BBC News
10.45pm Match of the Day
12.15am Girls Behind Bars: Stacey Dooley in the USA
1.15am Weather for the Week Ahead
1.20am BBC News
6.00am Breakfast

BBC 2

5.35pm Matthew Bourne's Cinderella

MORNING

7.45am Chimpanzee
8.55am The Big Family Cooking Showdown
9.55am Nadiya's British Food Adventure
10.55am The Sweet Makers: A Tudor Treat
11.55am A Hard Day's Night

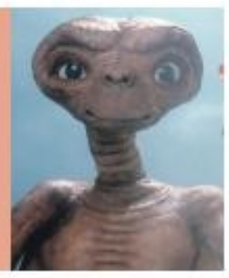
AFTERNOON

1.20pm The Eagle Has Landed
3.30pm The Repair Shop at Christmas
4.30pm Final Score
5.35pm Matthew Bourne's Cinderella

EVENING

7.30pm Christmas University Challenge 2017
8.00pm Reindeer Family and Me
9.00pm Dragons' Den
10.00pm QI
10.30pm Two Doors Down
11.00pm Joanna and Jennifer: Absolutely Champers
12.00am Saturday Night Fever - The Ultimate Disco Movie
1.10am Sir Tom Jones and Beverley Knight's Gospel Christmas
2.10am Inside the Christmas Factory
3.10am Blue Planet II

ITV



3.30pm E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial

MORNING

7.05am Horrid Henry
7.20am Wishfart
7.30am Scrambled!
9.25am Ferris Bueller's Day Off
11.25am Cats and Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore

AFTERNOON

1.00pm ITV Racing: Live from Kempton
3.30pm E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial
5.50pm ITV Evening News

EVENING

6.10pm Emmerdale
6.40pm Jurassic World
9.00pm Coronation Street
10.00pm ITV News
10.15pm Birds of a Feather
11.15pm The Keith and Paddy Picture Show
11.45pm Al Murray's Make Christmas Great Again
12.45am Jackpot247
3.00am Tenable
3.50am ITV Nightscreen
5.05am The Jeremy Kyle Show
6.00am Sooty

Channel 4

6.00pm Back to the Future

MORNING

8.25am Short Circuit
10.25am The Simpsons

AFTERNOON

12.10pm Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel
1.55pm Channel 4 News
2.00pm Child Genius v Celebrities Christmas Special
3.05pm The Great Christmas Bake Off
4.20pm The Little Mermaid

EVENING

6.00pm Back to the Future
8.00pm Travel Man
9.00pm Big Fat Quiz of the Year
11.10pm Four Weddings and a Funeral
1.20am The Inbetweeners
3.10am Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA
4.00am Location, Location, Location
4.55am Kirstie's Handmade Christmas
5.10am Moshi Monsters: The Movie
6.40am Short Circuit 2

Channel 5

4.10pm Sandringham: The Queen at Christmas

MORNING

8.50am Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom
9.10am Mofy
9.15am Access
9.20am Pets Make You Laugh Out Loud
9.55am Titanic
11.50am Matinee: Chariots of Fire

AFTERNOON

2.10pm Balmoral: A Hidden History
4.10pm Sandringham: The Queen at Christmas
5.20pm A Royal Night Out

EVENING

7.00pm The Strictly Story: Fake Tan, Tangos and a Ten From Len
8.30pm Dirty Dancing: Making Movie Magic
10.00pm Dirty Dancing
12.00am Football on 5
12.55am Aviva Premiership Rugby Highlights
1.45am Super Casino
3.05am Love/Hate
4.00am Now That's Funny!
4.45am House Doctor
5.10am HouseBusters
5.35am Wildlife SOS

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†At point of purchase. Prices and stock correct at time of print. 7 year / 100,000 mile manufacturer's warranty. See your local dealer or visit kia.co.uk for full warranty terms and exclusions. Warranties on other Kia Approved Used vehicles and non–Kia stock will vary – please see Brayley Kia Oxford for full details. Retail sales only. Subject to availability. Subject to status. T&Cs apply. For full details, terms & conditions of the Kia Approved Used Cars programme please visit kia.com/uk/used-cars/about-approved-used-cars.

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Wednesday December 27th

TOP TV

BBC 1

2.20pm Shrek 2

BBC 2

9.00pm Alan Partridge

ITV

9.25am Twins

Channel 4

8.00pm Supershoppers Sales Special

Channel 5

12.25pm Operation Crossbow

MORNING

7.45am Match of the Day
9.15am Turbo
10.45am The Princess and the Frog

7.25am An Island Parish
7.55am Bears
9.10am The Big Family Cooking Showdown
10.10am Nadiya's British Food Adventure
11.10am The Sweet Makers: A Georgian Treat

7.00am Mr. Bean
7.10am Horrid Henry
7.25am K-9
9.25am Twins
11.25am Cannonball Christmas Special

8.40am Lego Masters
9.40am The Simpsons
11.05am Small Soldiers

8.35am Shimmer and Shine
8.50am Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom
9.10am Mofy
9.15am Cruising with Jane McDonald
9.30am World's Strongest Man 2017
10.30am North Sea Hijack

AFTERNOON

12.15pm Snow Bears
1.15pm BBC News
1.25pm Regional News
1.30pm Weather
1.35pm Father Brown
2.20pm Shrek 2
3.45pm The Gruffalo
4.10pm Big Hero 6
5.45pm Pointless

12.10pm The Red Shoes
2.20pm World's Most Extraordinary Homes
3.20pm Inside the Factory
4.20pm The Man Who Never Was
6.00pm Thailand: Earth's Tropical Paradise
7.00pm Dad's Army
7.30pm Christmas University Challenge 2017
8.00pm Six Robots and Us

12.25pm You've Been Framed!
12.55pm ITV Lunchtime News
1.00pm Midsomer Murders
3.00pm Tenable
4.00pm Tipping Point
5.00pm The Chase

1.15pm Sunshine on Leith
3.10pm Sarah Beeny's Four Rooms
4.15pm Channel 4 News
4.30pm Back to the Future Part II

12.25pm Operation Crossbow
2.40pm Operation Daybreak
4.55pm The Guns of Navarone

EVENING

6.30pm BBC News
6.50pm Regional News
6.55pm Weather
7.00pm Celebrity Mastermind
7.30pm A Question of Sport
8.00pm Little Women
9.00pm The Miniaturist
10.00pm BBC News
10.20pm Regional News
10.25pm Weather
10.30pm Mrs. Brown's Boys
11.00pm Not Going Out
11.40pm Comic Relief 2017: 'Twas the Thanks After Red Nose Day

9.00pm Alan Partridge
10.00pm Oasis
11.55pm NFL
12.45am Britpop at the BBC
1.45am Blur at Glastonbury
2.45am Joanna and Jennifer: Absolutely Champers
3.45am Bill
5.25am This is BBC Two

6.00pm Paul O'Grady: For The Love of Dogs
6.30pm Regional News and Weather
6.45pm ITV Evening News
7.00pm Emmerdale
7.30pm Coronation Street
8.00pm Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire
10.50pm ITV News
11.05pm Tina and Bobby
12.05am Get Shirty
12.55am Jackpot247
3.00am May the Best House Win
3.50am ITV Nightscreen

6.30pm Hollyoaks
7.00pm The Supervet at Christmas
8.00pm Supershoppers Sales Special
9.00pm Miranda Does Christmas
10.00pm First Dates at Christmas
11.05pm East is East
12.50am Very British Problems at Christmas
1.45am That's So Last Century
2.35am Britain's Favourite Superhero
4.00am Location, Location, Location
4.55am Four in a Bed
5.20am Kirstie's Handmade Christmas
5.40am Holiday Inn

8.00pm World's Strongest Man 2017
9.00pm Most Shocking
12.00am Blind Date
1.00am Super Casino
3.05am Love/Hate
4.00am Cruising with Jane McDonald
4.45am House Doctor
5.10am HouseBusters
5.35am Wildlife SOS

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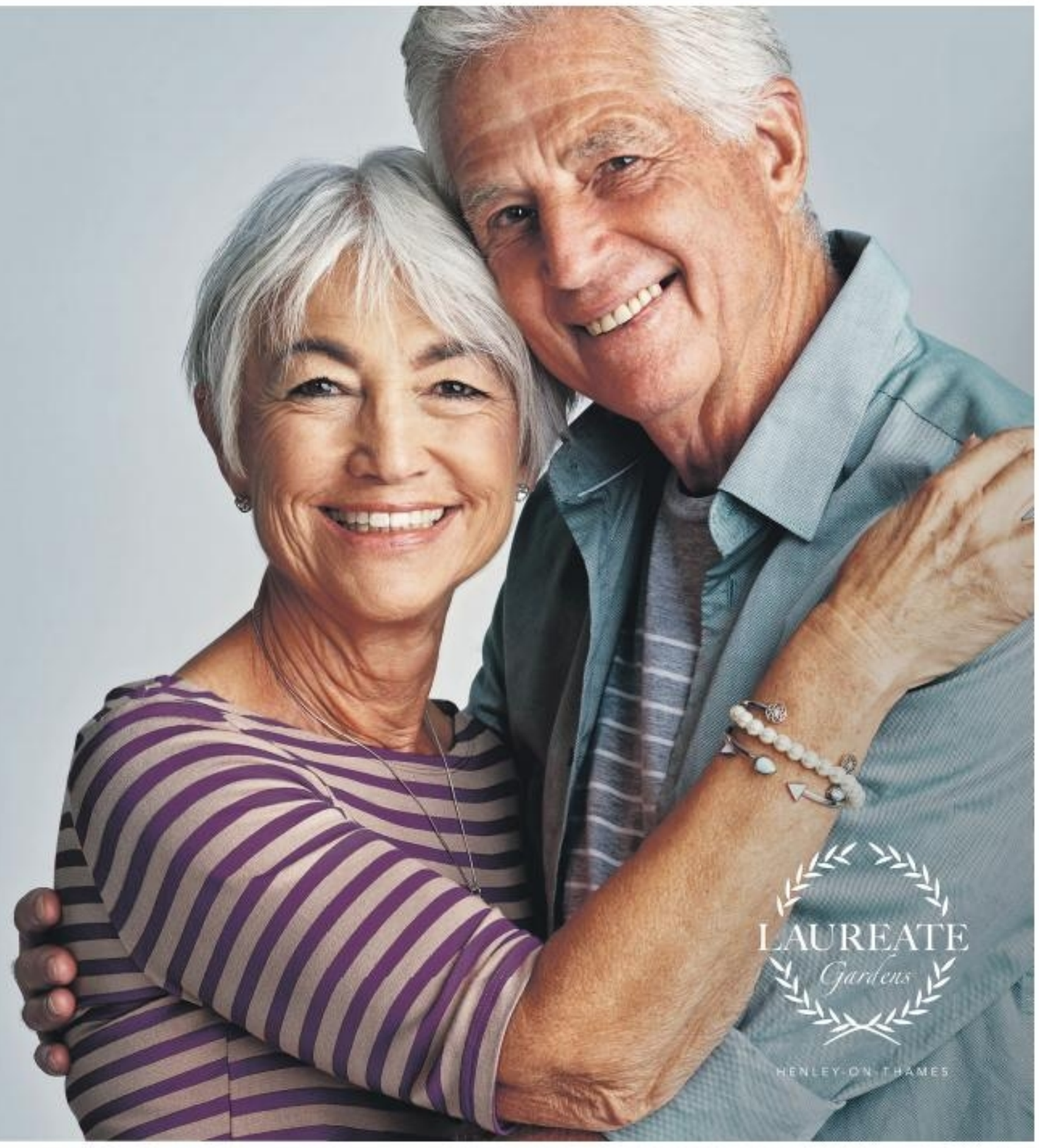

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Abarth 695 Biposto Record 1.4 T-jet 190hp

Fun to drive and with seasonal bells on

By **Tony Yates**

I HAVE owned an Abarth 595 for about two years now – and as it was starting to show its age a little, I thought I would go out and buy the newer version because to be honest I really don't want to buy anything else when the little Abarth suits me just fine – also for the simple reason that it happens to be one of the best small cars money can buy.

So when Fiat offered me a test in the Special Edition 695 Biposto Record – I thought 'oh god it's going to be a track-focused car that's brilliant and nothing like my standard Abarth'.

Well I am happy to report it's just as much fun to drive as my standard Abarth, but the 695 has the 'bells on it'.

So, here is a quick rundown of what you can expect from a limited run of just 133 examples.

You won't be disappointed if you decide to invest in an Abarth 695 –if you can get one

Power & efficiency

The little 695 is powered by a 1.4 T-Jet engine that has 190hp. Top speed comes in around 143mph and a 0-62 time of 5.9sec. Plus, a large amount of torque, 250Nm of it actually. Of course, this being the 695 – means it is one step away from being a full blown race car – well almost!

You don't get a rear windscreen wiper, or radio, or air-conditioning, or rear seats. OK, it's a stripped back track-focused car, I get that – but come on – I'm amazed they managed to find the time to fit in a passenger seat if I'm being totally honest.

Then again, that aside, it's still totally epic in every way. Fuel consumption – well that's the best and most pleasing part here. On a combined cycle it returned around 45mpg – I'm not joking either – the little Abarth just sips away saving you bundles of cash until you press the loud pedal really hard – then it all goes totally bonkers.

On the road

I will keep it simple here; the 695 is the perfect car to scoot about in – because it's poised thanks to front and rear suspension with hydraulic adjustment and racing springs – all by Extreme Shox. Yes, the ride is like a rock – but how it pins itself to the road is just stunning – which is why you will always have a big smile on your face whenever you drive it.

Design & technology

So, being the stripped out version - what do you actually get?

Exterior: Modena Yellow Exterior colour with Anthracite trim and exclusive '695 Record Badge', front suspension with hydraulic height-adjustment with racing engine springs by Extreme Shox, rear suspension with hydraulic adjustment with racing springs by Extreme Shox, four-piston aluminium fixed brake calipers by Brembo, mechanical slip differential, self-ventilated oversized 305x28mm perforated front brake discs, 240x11 mm perforated rear brake discs, high performance front brake pads, Lightened 18" alloy wheels with 215/35 (18") tyres by O.Z, rear bumper with carbon fibre spoiler, oversized roof spoiler, front intercooler with racing configuration, oval trumpet airbox by BMC, dual-stage exhaust with twin titanium tailpipes by Akrapovic.

Interior: 695 Biposto Record badge with unique serial number, leather and Alcantara sports seats with carbon shell by Sabelt, sporty aluminium pedal kit with titanium finish, 7" TFT colour display instrument panel with 695 Record logo animation, leather steering wheel, Internal rear titanium 3-bar roll-cage by Poggipolini, light-weight racing front and rear door panels.

To sum up

If you remember the good old days of a proper Mini and want to rekindle the art of having fun while driving, then pop down to your local Abarth dealer and order a 695. I promise you will not be disappointed – unless they are all sold out! Price from: £36,665

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2009 09 LAND ROVER RANGE ROVER SPORT 3.6 TDV8 SPORT HSE 5D AUTO 269 BHP, Grey, Diesel, 5 Drs, Alloys, ESP, Xenon's, 99,400 miles **£12,450**

2011 60 AUDI A1 1.4 TFSI S LINE 3D 122 BHP In Grey, Petrol, 3 Door, 44k..... **£9,150**

2010 10 AUDI A4 1.8 TFSI SE 4D AUTO 158 BHP, In Silver, Petrol, 39,000 miles, 4 Door..... **£8,555**

2012 12 MAZDA CX-5 2.2 D SPORT NAV 5D 173 BHP, Grey, Diesel, Anit lock, Heated seats, 120k..... **£8,150**

2011 11 FORD FOCUS 1.6 TITANIUM X TDCI 5D 113 BHP, Diesel, manual, Air-con, Bluetooth, only 42,900 miles..... **£7,148**

2013 13 RENAULT CLIO 1.1 DYNAMIQUE MEDIANAV 5D 75 BHP, red, c/lockin, e.mirrors, driver airbag, 53k..... **£5,650**

2014 14 VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 LIMITED EDITION 3D 83 BHP, black, traction control, a/c, rear wash/wipe, 41k **£5,595**

2007 57 MINI HATCH COOPER 1.6, 118 BHP, Silver, Petrol, Alloys, Keyless Start, ABS, 3 Dr, 63,300 miles **£3,540**

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2010 10 AUDI A4 1.8 TFSI SE 4D AUTO

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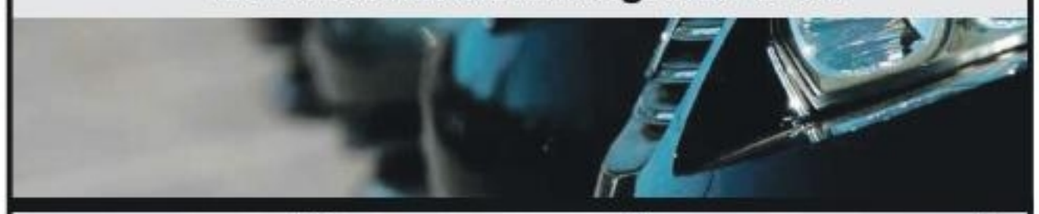

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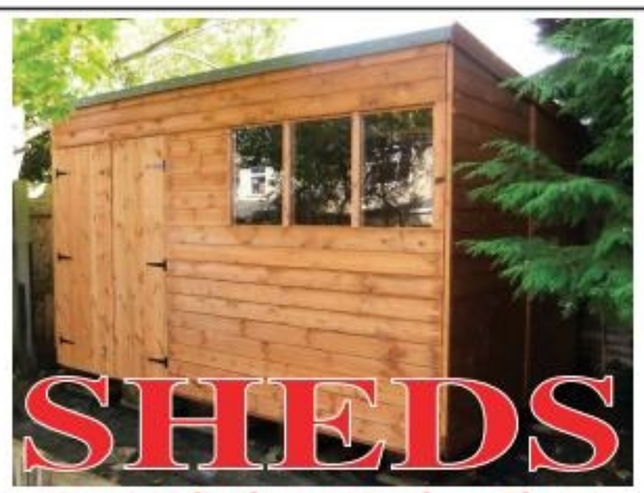

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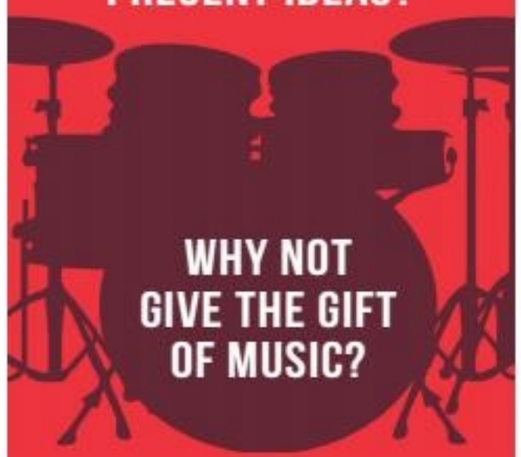

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JOHN Lennon wedding LP boxed set with all inserts on USA apple label £80 tel: 01189 667140

STATIONARY engine magazines 1970s 2013 for sale tel: 01635 371174

EXERCISE bike with display function and fly wheel excellent condition £25 tel: 01993 359845

NEW as purchased 5 DVD gift set tin military vehicles cost £10 excellent gift £4 tel: 01491 838988

FULL set of golf clubs with bag and trolley very good outfit £30 tel: 01993 778827

TOYOTA over locker sewing machine with instruction manual almost new £40 tel: 01865 881556

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CARPENTERS new aprons £5 tel: 01865 763851

CLAY potting pots about fifty £5 tel: 01865 763851

ROYAL Albert bone china horizons (fantasia) 35 piece dinner service used twice all in perfect condition £50 tel: Ox 374163

LADIES full length 'Dannimac" quilted lining dark mushroom detach fur collar size 16 worn twice (cost £75) £10 tel: Ox 374163

ASSORTED garden tools rakes hoes spades open to offers plus more items ring me on 01993 851454

GENTS road bike 21 speed excellent condition £60 tel: 01295 253797

WANTED Beatles or solo 60s photos, negatives or snap shots etc. tel: 01189 667940

MADONNA 12" train sleeve Holiday single £7 tel: 01189 667940

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HISTORY of rock magazines 122 in binders £15 tel: 07849 079051

HERITAGE bath new white 66" x 28" £20 tel: 07849 079051

ALLOY wheels plus tyres 16 inch fit free lander vgc £60 tel: 07849 079051

FOUR folding chairs chrome and tan £40 tel: 07849 079051

BOWL, jug and potty vgc £10 tel: 07586 067412

OLD fashion overcoat size large £10 tel: 07586 067412

CINTIQUE verment armchair in mint green with antique wood. Ht99cm x depth 88cm by width 80cm seat ht 46cm £50 tel: 01235 819757

ROGER Black exercise bike as new cost £150 £50 ono tel: 01865 884008

PAIR horse mugs £5 as new tel: 01865 714519

BOX of LEGO £10 Playmobile figures x12 £10 Titanic book and unused titanic jigsaw £10 tel: 01865 714519

WANTED NSU Quickly moped to restore as project. Consider other makes tel: 01865 762859

BOOT sale lot large selection of items suitable for trader from house clearance £100 the lot tel: 01865 762859

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Sofabed 2 seater black leather Argos 578/7603 hardly used £180 Please call Mike Evans tel: 01235 527292

LINO off-cut piece new top quality 2mtr x 1.7mtr green/grey fleck ideal for toilet or utility room £10 tel: 01865 762859

CARPENTERS new aprons £5 tel: 01865 763851

BOX of pottery plants pots £5 tel: 01865 763851

HIGH chair/stool with armed back light wood pine? Good condition £12 tel: 07944 106694

COLLECTORS item old wooden bagatelle with original balls in box as new £25 tel: 07944 106694

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ACTIVIA exercise bike. Less than 12 months old. Fold up vgc make a nice xmas present cost £75 sell for £40 tel: 01865 770878

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JANE, 49yrs, own home, loves nature, artistic. Love to socialise. WLTM gent any age, must have GSOH. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429165**

SUSANNA, 42yrs, very attractive well groomed married lady. Works in London, can travel anywhere but cannot accommodate. If you are willing to meet on those terms contact me. **Text Only. Box: 4038007**

VALERIE, caring thoughtful lady. Attractive with GSOH. Seeking similar gent. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429163**

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ATTRACTIVE retired lady, 67yrs. Looks very young with blonde hair and blue eyes. Loves holidays, arts, still interested in meeting a nice man for some fun and laughter. Get in touch by phone or text. ACA.**Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 428969**

ATTRACTIVE lady, late sixties, hoping to meet a nice chap for walking, wining dining, and much much more. Age unimportant ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429161**

AISHA, petite Asian lady, just 23yrs, living at home but hoping to meet a sophisticated, well travelled man to teach me the ways of the world. Pls be discreet as my parents are very strict. **Text only. Box : 4003844**

ATTRACTIVE widow, 70s, solvent, fit and still attractive GSOH, hoping to meet a nice gent for days out, possibly more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429159**

TABITHA, attractive well groomed lady, 32yrs, own house, good job, hoping for some naught text chat with older gent. **Text Only. Box: 4028177**

PETITE, professional black lady seeks broadminded white male of any age to share the finer things in life. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429123**

ANGELA, 48yrs, seeks no strings casual fun. I have my own house, car and am solvent. I'm busty with a firm figure. You must be open minded, age/status unimportant. **Tel: 0906 515 3015 Box: 427633**

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MARIELLE, 45yrs, curvy attractive lady, likes older men. I'm married so you must be discreet. Lets meet up, and make each other smile again. Call me and lets get to know each other. **Tel: 0906 515 3039 Box: 426853**

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IAN, 65, 5ft6, lonely widower, good cook, likes a movie and a glass of wine, loads of cuddles, looking for a nice lady, 50-70, for LTR. Newbury. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429199**

HI my name is Roy, I'm 5ft6, blue eyes, living in Newbury, looking for a lady between 50-75. I'm just lonely and looking for a relationship so give me a ring please. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429111**

MALE, 65, widower, likes gardening, football, films on TV, WLTM my soul mate, I'm lonely and looking for love. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429129**

HI my name is Roy, I'm 5ft6, blue eyes, living in Newbury, looking for a lady between 50-75. I'm just lonely and looking for a relationship so give me a ring please. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429111**

MALE, 59, N/S, medium build, 5ft7, from Berkshire, no ties, enjoys days out, sporting events and lots more, seeking a nice lady, 30-60, who is honest and reliable, for friendship and hopefully more. If you would like to get in touch please do. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 428289**

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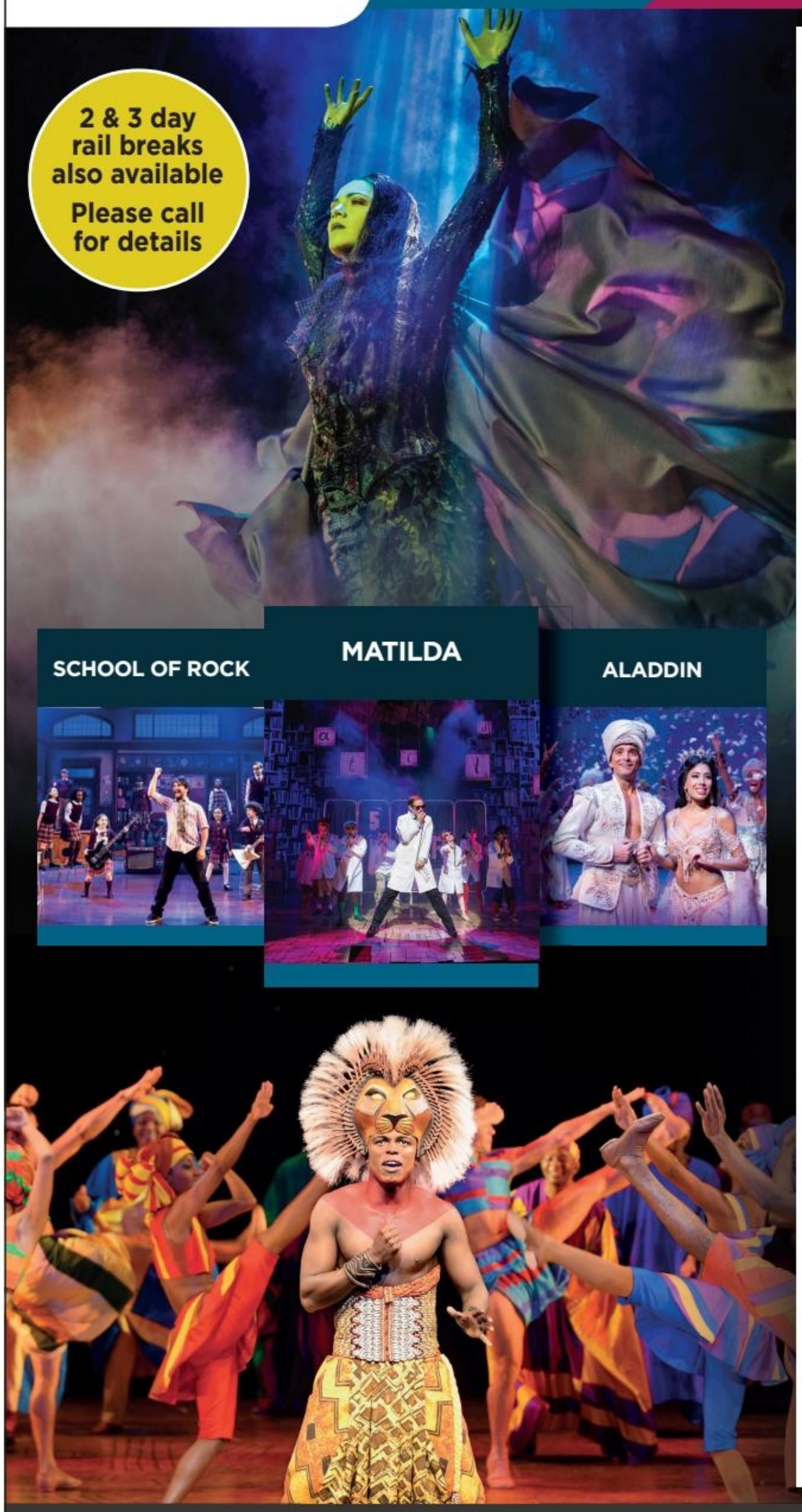

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Sport

Stars slaughter lame Lions

By George Welch

Ice hockey

INVINCIBLE Oxford City Stars continued to bulldoze their way through NIHL2 as they exhibited another domineering performance to punish Lee Valley Lions 18-1 – the second time they have won by that scoreline this season.

Indeed, it was like an exhibition match for top-of-the-table Oxford who made it 11 wins on the spin with this latest thrashing, extending their lead at the top to seven points.

Kamil Kinkor was the shining star for City, notching an incredible four goals and five assists.

There were also hat-tricks for Josh Florey and Josh Oliver, while assist kings Florey, Stewart Tait and Conor Redmond made things happen with three assists each.

The Stars were utterly dominant, powering in 63 shots on goal compared to Lee Valley's 10.

Remarkably, however, it was the visiting London side who took an early lead through Simon Geldart on 5:49.

Picture: Paul Foster

But after that the Lions were tamed and the Stars shone brighter.

Kinkor quickly levelled the scores less than a minute later and further strikes from Andrew Cox (9 minutes), Dom Hopkins (13) and Oliver (15) gave the hosts a 4-1 lead at the end of period one.

Kenny Redmond's side were most rampant in the middle period, scoring an unprecedented 10 goals in less than 17 minutes.

Kinkor (21), Tait (22) and Florey (24) made it 7-1 on 24 minutes, putting them on track to beat their 18-1 win over Basingstoke Buffalo in October.

And a red-hot streak of seven goals in six minutes lurched Oxford closer to beating that scoreline.

Florey (32 & 33), Dax Hedges (32 & 35), Oliver (34), Kinkor (37) and Redmond (38) made it 14-1 heading into the final period.

The Stars needed five goals in the third period to beat their record but – in the only disappointment of the night – could only match it.

Kinkor netted his 23rd goal of a prolific campaign straight after the restart and goals from Joe Edwards (45), Oliver (50) and Will Harrison (58) rounded off the resounding win.

Oxford travel to Bristol Pitbulls on Saturday in their last game of the calendar year before welcoming Bracknell Hornets to Oxpens Road on January 7.

Last-gasp drama denies Puritans a point at home

Banbury United

UNLUCKY Banbury United narrowly lost 2-1 at home to third-placed Weymouth in a tight Evo-Stik Southern Premier league contest on Saturday.

The Puritans will consider themselves unlucky to have nothing to show for their efforts, especially as they went so close to snatching an equaliser late on.

In the dying minutes Luke Carnell had a header saved and Stephane Zubar had to be alert to clear striker Leam Howards' rebounded effort off the line.

But it was Terras forward Harry Baker who had more luck in front of goal, netting a brace for the Dorset side at the Banbury Plant Hire Community Stadium.

His first came on four minutes when he found the top corner, although United were back on level terms on the cusp of half time thanks to an Abdulai Baggie own goal.

United improved in the second half but were frustrated by Mark Travers in the Weymouth goal who thwarted Banbury's best chance, a fierce Conor McDonagh drive.

The visitors were more clinical in front of goal and Baker was never going to miss when Ben Thomson squared for the forward to tap home the winner just before the hour.

Weymouth were comfortable until they had to deny Banbury in the dramatic finish.

Banbury (9th) are away at Biggleswade Town (14th) on Saturday.

■ Top scorer Jefferson Louis has moved on to pastures new after agreeing to join Chesham United. The 38-year-old made 27 appearances for United since signing at the start of the season and scored 17 goals. Chesham is his 36th club of a nomadic career, which has also included spells at Oxford United, Oxford City and Thame United.

Freds fail to close gap after dismal goalless draw

Hellenic round-up

WANTAGE Town moved up to third in the table but missed the chance to close the gap at the top of the table following a drab 0-0 draw against Windsor.

Jack Powell and Ryan Jackson had the best chances for the Freds, but the home side couldn't find a winner and close in on Highworth Town who dropped rare points against Binfield.

The result ended a run of four consecutive wins for Ben Sadler's side who were without Nick Thorne and Mark Threlfall from the win against Brackley Town Saints the previous week.

Neither side did enough to score in a scrappy first 45 minutes.

Wantage's best chance came when Steve Robertson was unable to scramble the ball in from a corner.

For Windsor, Bradley Pearce headed over and Paul Coyne also struck off target, while 45-year-old former Premier League player Barry Hayles had little chance to make an impact up front.

The hosts had their first dominant spell of the game well into the second half, with Powell and Jackson both missing the target.

Powell had a better chance a little later but his cracking goal-bound strike was kept out by a superb save from Windsor goalkeeper Hugo Sobte, who hadn't been hugely tested beforehand.

After that though, in the closing stages of the match, Windsor looked the most likely to score.

Wantage did well to hold out for the point in the dying minutes, although Windsor would probably have been more content with the draw.

There was no weekend league action for Abingdon United or Oxford City Nomads.

Additional reporting by Oxon Football

Railwaymen steam up to play-off spot

Evo Stik round-up

DIDCOT Town proved they mean business this season as they halted high flying Wimborne Town's unbeaten run with an impressive 1-0 win to close in on the play-offs.

Captain Adam Learoyd bagged the only goal of the game on nine minutes as the Railwaymen got back on track with the narrow victory, stopping their host's seven match unbeaten streak.

Ninth-placed Town are now level on points with Wimborne Town, who occupy the last Evo-Stik South West play-off berth.

Saturday's winner came when Learoyd headed home a George Reid corner.

Didcot looked lively and felt hard done by when Reid went down in the area.

Reid and Marlon Agyakwa threatened on both wings but neither could double the visitors' tally at The Cuthbury.

The hosts tried to come back into the game as the half went on but were unable to test Leigh Bedwell in the Diddy goal.

They upped the pressure in the second half in search of an equaliser – Toby Holmes and Luke Burbidge both went close – but Didcot's defence held strong.

In the East division, Thame United moved to within three points of the play-offs with a 4-0 win at Kempston Rovers on Tuesday.

For the second week running several eighth-tier matches were impacted by the recent freezing weather.

North Leigh have had their last three matches postponed.

The following games were postponed on Saturday: Kidlington v Winchester, North Leigh v Swindon Supermarine and, in the East division, Kempston Rovers v Thame United.

Skipper Adam Learoyd grabbed Didcot's winner against Wimborne Town. Picture: *Roger Neal*

Wheatley end year on a high

Rugby union

WHEATLEY saw out 2017 in style after comprehensively despatching Bletchley 29-5 in a one-sided BBO Premier fixture on Saturday.

Caillin Taylor wins a lineout Picture: *Simon Chadbone*

Sanda Mpanza and Joe Hobdell marshalled a disciplined defence that kept a clean sheet in the first-half, while the Wheats were lethal at the other end as Iain Downer, Joe Taylor, Aaron Laman and Alex Gabbidon all scored tries.

The win means Wheatley will end the year fifth in the Wadworth 6X BBO Premier on 30 points.

Elsewhere in the division, Abingdon continue their search for a first win since early October after a run of seven consecutive defeats culminating in a 48-7 loss to Littlemore which leaves them one place above the bottom.

In South West 1 East, Banbury overcame north Oxfordshire rivals Bicester 57-10 as they race ahead of Salisbury in the table ending the year in third on 56 points while Bicester languish in 13th just two points above bottom club Marlow on 15.

Grove lost 27-20 to Stratford-Upon-Avon and Oxford Harlequins posted a 48-28 win over Witney.

In National League South 2 Chinnor are flying high as their 71 point total means they will finish 2017 top of the table after thumping Canterbury 41-7.

Meanwhile, Henley notched up three wins in a row after returning from their trip to play London Irish Wild Geese as victors, winning 24-17.

Evo-Stik South Premier
Saturday 16 December
Banbury United 1-2 Weymouth

Evo-Stik South East
Saturday 16 December
AFC Rushden & Diamonds P-P
Thame United
Tuesday 19 December
Kempston Rovers 0-4 **Thame United**

Evo-Stik South West
Saturday 16 December
Kidlington P-P Winchester
North Leigh P-P Swindon Supermarine
Wimborne Town 0-1 **Didcot Town**

Uhlsport Hellenic League Premier Division
Saturday 16 December
Wantage Town 0-0 Windsor

Ivo eyes up early return after promising recovery

By George Welch

INJURY-STRUCK Ivo Pekalski is back in England as the Oxford United midfield enters the next stage of his rehabilitation.

The midfielder ruptured cruciate ligaments in his left knee after landing awkwardly during training just days after signing from Swedish side Halmstad for an undisclosed fee in August.

The 27-year-old was in England for a few weeks after an operation but has spent the rest of the time back in his home country.

After making good progress the former Sweden international has returned to his club to complete his recovery – and the U's hope he will be back in action in February.

Frustrated by his time on the sidelines, Pekalski said: "When you come to a new club you always want to do your best to get out on the pitch and play so it was a disappointment [to get injured].

Ivo Pekalski is back in England **Picture**: *Steve Daniels*

"But that's football. I accept the situation, deal with it and do the best I can from it [sic]."

But the Swede hasn't been sat around doing nothing, having worked hard on recovery and training everyday. "If you don't do anything you won't get to where you want to get to. Since day one I've been prepared to do whatever I can to get back – and that's my ambition," he said.

"There are a lot of things to do which is why I'm not setting a date."

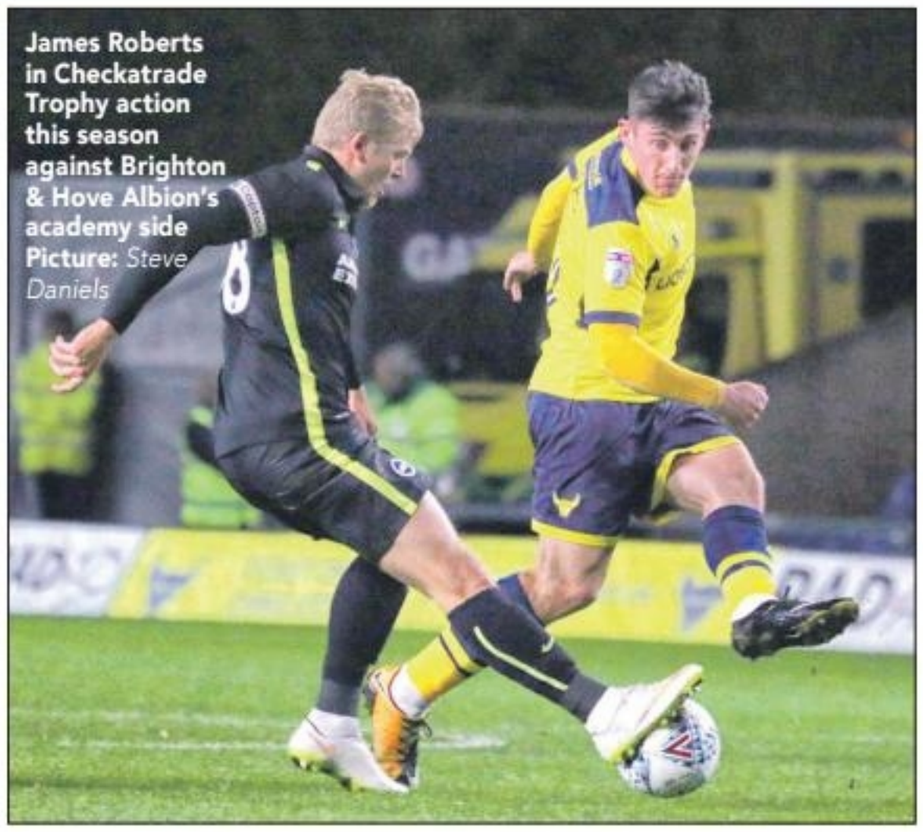
Pekalski won't be rushed back but the club is tentatively aiming for a February return to training for the midfield man.

It would take time to rebuild fitness but, should his recovery continue at its current pace, he would return a month ahead of schedule.

Pekalski admitted the injury was frustrating but that he had been keeping an eye on how United's season has been panning out without him.

He said: "I've been following every game and I think there's more [for the team] to build on.

"It's been pretty tough to get everything together [due to injuries] when you have a lot of in and outs – but we're still in a good position."



James Roberts in Checkatrade Trophy action this season against Brighton & Hove Albion's academy side **Picture:** *Steve Daniels*

More action for on-loan striker

OXFORD United striker James Roberts has joined National League side Guiseley on a month's loan.

The 21-year-old has made three appearances from the bench for the U's this season but manager Pep Clotet wants him to enjoy competitive first team action on a more regular basis.

The move to the West Yorkshire side sees Roberts team up with assistant manager Adam Murray, a former United midfielder.

He is yet to make his debut for the club after their league match at Gateshead was postponed due to a frozen pitch on Saturday and Tuesday.

Roberts said in October he is determined to prove his worth to the team, despite not starting an Oxford game since the club were in League Two.

He made his senior debut for the U's at the age of 18 in 2014 but, since then, his career has taken an undesired path.

The injury-hit striker, who lost his 16-year-old brother Ben in October 2015, said he has the determination to continue his comeback.

He said: "As long as you can be mentally strong, keep your head up and keep believing in yourself, there's no reason you can't take a bad stretch and turn it into a good stretch."

Roberts, who scored two goals in 15 Oxford City appearances last season, burst onto the scene at the U's with a brace in his first start, a 3-1 FA Cup win over Grimsby in November 2014.

He went on to play 26 times and score five goals in all competitions that season but has struggled since for goals and game time.

Fingers crossed for young U's cup tie

OUFC Under-18s

OXFORD United will try again in the FA Youth Cup third round this evening (Thursday) after last week's tie against Dagenham & Redbridge was called off due to snow on the pitch.

The game was originally scheduled for kick-off on December 13 but the Under-18's fixture had to be postponed when the pitch at Oxford City's Court Place Farm was deemed unsuitable when the snowfall earlier in the week had not yet cleared.

United had put together a run of good form in league and cup going undefeated in the EFL Youth Alliance Southwest Division from September until this earlier month.

Defeats to Exeter City bookended the undefeated streak that saw the U's score 21 goals and concede just five times over the seven fixtures.

Skipper James Cowan has led his team to hard fought victories in the last two games in the Youth Cup.

The young U's will line up against Dagenham & Redbridge on Thursday **Picture:** *OUFC*

The young U's needed extra time to progress from the first round against Gloucester.

A late goal from Albie Hopkins overturned a 1-0 half time deficit, before Owen James spun on the edge of the box in extra time and drove a left-footed effort into the back of the net to see the U's through.

An emphatic performance in the second round to despatch Bristol Rovers 3-1 was enough to set up the clash with the Daggers.

The youth side will vie with Dagenham & Redbridge tonight (Thursday) for a shot at playing Ipswich Town in the next round.

City swap pitches for snow as weather hits

OXFORD City may be languishing in 19th on 21 points in the National League South, but the club were walking in the air last week as the Hoops got into the festive spirit.

A bout of heavy snowfall left Marsh Lane blanketed in white forcing the club to close for three days and training to be called off for safety reasons.

But it didn't stop the Hoops from enjoying the seasonal weather as City tweeted pictures of snowmen sporting the club's colours.

City will be hoping they can open one of their Christmas presents early when they take on Hampton & Richmond Borough in the league on Saturday.

Hoops fans embraced the snow to send the club pictures of their Oxford City Snowmen. **Picture:** *Oxford City FC*

SkyBet League 1		GP	GD	PTS
1	Wigan Athletic	21	30	48
2	Shrewsbury Town	21	14	44
3	Blackburn Rovers	21	20	43
4	Bradford City	22	9	42
5	Scunthorpe United	22	11	39
6	Charlton Athletic	21	3	35
7	Portsmouth	22	3	35
8	Peterborough United	22	2	32
9	Oxford United	22	8	31
10	Rotherham United	22	4	30
11	Walsall	21	-1	28
12	Southend United	22	-9	28
13	Blackpool	22	-3	27
14	Oldham Athletic	22	-4	27
15	Fleetwood Town	22	-4	27
16	Bristol Rovers	22	-7	27
17	MK Dons	22	-7	26
18	Doncaster Rovers	22	-5	24
19	Gillingham	22	-5	23
20	Northampton Town	22	-20	22
21	Rochdale	21	-5	21
22	Plymouth Argyle	22	-13	21
23	AFC Wimbledon	21	-11	20
24	Bury Town	21	-10	17

Sport

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A good point ahead of busy festive period for U's

James Henry goes down in the Rochdale area
Picture: *Darrell Fisher*

By George Welch

Rochdale 0
Oxford United 0
Attendance: 2,588

PEP Clotet believes his play-off chasing Oxford United side's goalless draw at struggling Rochdale on Saturday was a point gained, not two dropped.

The United boss cited the freezing conditions and Rochdale's deceiving home form for a positive away result as the U's gained a point on the League One play-off pack.

And Clotet isn't wrong.

Although the Spaniard agreed that the match should have gone ahead, the freezing pitch made it difficult for United's natural possession-based game to flow as temperatures struck freezing.

And Dale, despite languishing the wrong side of the dotted line, have a solid home record having taken points from Oxford's promotion rivals Peterborough United and Scunthorpe United.

Clotet said: "It's a useful point here, especially in the conditions we were facing. Rochdale are a strong team to play at their place. They have had some very good results here and we knew it was going to be very difficult.

"The team never made an excuse of the poor conditions of the pitch and tried to make the best of it.

"The fact we got a clean sheet and, despite not being able to score, we take the point."

It was a Baltic afternoon in the north west and the two keepers probably welcomed shots on goal just to warm up.

The palms of U's stopper Simon Eastwood were certainly thawed when he pushed away a fierce drive and a free kick from Callum Camps.

And the visiting custodian's heroics continued into the second half, pulling off a terrific stop to deny Joe Bunney.

Even when Eastwood was beaten, defender Mike Williamson was on hand to protect the Oxford goal.

At the other end, Josh Lillis had to perform his own fine piece of goalkeeping to keep out a low Wes Thomas drive.

Neither side could force a winner to send their fans home happy – and probably warmer.

"For us it's positive – the team put in a good display, understood the game and worked very hard for it," Clotet said.

United host table-toppers Wigan Athletic on Saturday before playing away at Gillingham on Boxing Day.

The U's face another away day on December 30 at Bradford City before welcoming 2018 in at home to MK Dons on New Year's Day.

Doing the ugly things well paid off on a difficult freezing pitch

NOT for the first time this season defender Mike Williamson praised Oxford United's fighting spirit after picking up a goalless draw at Rochdale on Saturday.

The centre half led the defensive line as United weathered plenty of pressure from the home side on a freezing pitch at Spotland.

Williamson and his fellow defenders had plenty to do in a game that was near impossible for pretty football.

The 34-year-old said: "We've shown this season that we have no lack of attacking ability and options, and we have some great offensive players.

"This was a challenge for the team but we executed it really well with our shape and reliance. We created some good moments, it was just a difficult pitch so it wasn't meant to be.

"But it was all about the ugly things today [Saturday] and being diligent which we did well."

Former Newcastle United and Wolverhampton Wanderers man Williamson was also full of praise for the U's fans who trekked to the north west.

He said: "It was a phenomenal effort. It's a difficult place for the players to come to never mind the supporters.

"Credit to them as they got us through some tough moments in the game. We had to defend and do the ugly things well, and they showed fantastic support."

Williamson, whose appearance at Dale meant he played back-to-back league games for the first time since September, has played 14 games since joining United in July.

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